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BROWNSTONE BROWNS
AND
SABROGA TRUNKS

BY
HENRY COLLINS BROWN

Founder of the Museum of the City of New York

Author of

"The Story of Old New York," etc.

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To G. A. Z.

Van Alstyne, France-Jane p. 293-299.



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his gratitude for the use of the
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contemporary publications.*

Preface

DUTTONS remind me this morning that I practically promised a second book on the story of Old New York in which I would complete the narrative. Here it is:

New York is an interesting town to write about. As a city, we are still very young, and historic atmosphere comes only with age. We cannot halt you at a street corner and say: In this building England's greatest Queen saw *As You Like It* played for the first time with her friend, "Will" Shakespeare, in the cast; or this is where Mme. DuBarry worked as a little milliner, when the Grand Monarch found her.

But we *can* say: Here is where old Peter Stuyvesant lies, last and greatest of the Dutch Governors. He is dead; pray for him. And here, with tears coursing down his cheeks, Washington, great leader of the Revolution, bade farewell to his comrades-in-arms.

And, best of all, we are slowly, but surely, beginning to appreciate our priceless heritage. I know that from the letters I receive.

So it seems to me that I am right in saying that the background of New York is now more mellow, more alluring than seems apparent at first glance. And it now has its own Museum for the preservation of such bygone treasures as are committed to its reverent care.

And we have many firms more than a hundred years old and are rapidly adding to the number. They may not all possess the atmosphere of that Fleet Street firm in London, who sold the tea that was thrown overboard in Boston Harbor, which started the Revolution, and are still doing busi-

ness at the old stand. The shop where Lord Nelson, England's greatest naval hero, bought his stockings, is also still doing business. The gallant sailor walked in one day after he had lost his arm in a fight with a treasure ship off Cadiz, and was met with the sympathy and regret of the proprietor over his misfortune. "Lucky for you it was not a leg," said Nelson. "Y'see, I want another dozen pairs of silk stockings." Nelson's orders in writing are still preserved in the old shop. They do not tell you, however, that when Nelson's body was brought home from Trafalgar Bay, for burial, it was preserved in a cask of rum, as was the embalming method of that day; nor that the sailors bored holes in the cask and drank up all the rum.

Returning for a moment to my first book on this story of Old New York. Some of my critics, not in a spirit of carping criticism, but solely in the interest of Truth and Accuracy, are sorely distressed by occasional lapses of omission or commission. Let them be comforted. Who am I to claim infallibility?

It was the lovable young English poet, John Keats, who wrote:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent upon a peak in Darien.

And it wasn't Cortez at all, who gazed upon the Pacific, but Balboa.

Then, renowned Lord Macaulay, writing of General Schomberg, said: "The illustrious warrior was laid to rest in that venerable abbey, hallowed by the dust of many generations of princes, heroes and poets."

Alas! for the great English historian, Schomberg was not buried in Westminster at all, but in Dublin.

So, not to be outdone by either Keats or Macaulay, I neglected to record two most important items; the visit of Benjamin Franklin, in search of a job, to the print shop of William Bradford, who had just started the *Gazette*, the first newspaper to be printed in New York. "When I arrived in New York," writes Franklin, in his autobiography, "I immediately repaired to the shop of one William Bradford who had commenced the publishing of a newspaper. Mr. Bradford received me courteously but was sorry to inform me that he had already more hands than work for them to do. But his brother in Philadelphia, Alexander Bradford, had just lost his head man and perhaps if I went there I might find the employment I was seeking.

"Philadelphia was ninety miles further away, but on this slender hope I determined to go there."

Thus was the great philosopher lost to the City of New York!

The second omission, equally deplorable, concerned Washington's third and last visit to our city before the Revolution. He was still an unknown Virginia planter. He had come for the purpose of entering young "Jacky" Custis as a fellow-student in Kings College with Alexander Hamilton, DeWitt Clinton, and the others. He left a sum of money with good Dr. Myles Cooper, President of the College, with strict injunctions that Jacky was not to have any "advances" without special permission from home. Daddy was still slightly apprehensive of the lure of the wicked city for an unsophisticated young man from fast-riding, hard-playing, deep-drinking, but wholly virtuous Virginia. So Jacky must strictly abjure the primrose path of dalliance. Oh, dear!

His business with the college finished, Washington repaired for the night to the little tavern on the corner of Broadway and Thames Street, the Province Arms, kept by Samuel Farmer.

What did mine host of the inn discuss with the young gentleman from far-off Virginia? Whom else did he meet ere

mounting his horse in the morning for the long ride back to Mount Vernon? All that and more we would like to know. But history is silent.

An ex-New Englander, now residing in the West, is much incensed at my remarks on Boston in the War of 1812 and says that to read my stuff no one would suppose that there had ever been any heroes in New England at all.

I never said that. The whole world recalls two, at least, with an affection deep and abiding—Mary and her little Lamb.

“Mary” was a real person; her full name was Mary Elizabeth Sawyer. Her lamb was one of twins forsaken by an unnatural mother. Mary took it home and cared for it herself. They became fast friends and when Mary left for school in the morning, to be gone all day, her pet missed her very much; so one day it followed her. At school Mary sought to hide it by tucking it under her desk and covering it with her shawl, but when she went out to her spelling class the lamb naturally trotted after her. This was great fun for the rest of the kids and they almost laughed their heads off. So, of course, the lamb had to evacuate the premises—or, as we say on Park Avenoo—le petit agneau reçut la rush du bum.

On that particular morning a young student named Rawson was present as a visitor. The incident awakened the Muse within him and a few days later he handed Mary the first three verses of that now classic New England idyll, “Mary’s Little Lamb.” The poor chap died soon after, ignorant of the immortality of his verses. So, even if the crop of Yankee heroes is neither robust nor numerous compared to New York, the whole world is indebted to Boston, to “Mary,” and to Elizabeth Foster Goose (1665) for this splendid contribution to childhood, and all Christendom gladly acknowledges its obligation and its lasting gratitude.

And what a lovely thing it was for Mr. Ford to preserve for us the old schoolhouse. Henry will be remembered for that long after his fame as an engineer has been forgotten.

A Chicago friend also chides me for ignoring in my wanderings the existence of the charming and fascinating Belle of the Prairies. He admits that Chicago was but two years old when my story ended, but claims recognition on the ground that a New York man, Captain John Whistler, grandfather of the celebrated artist J. M'Neill Whistler, was the U.S.A. officer who built Fort Dearborn. "If that doesn't qualify," he adds, "then please recall that one of our Mayors promised to bust King George one on the snoot if he ever came to Chicago."

That seems to me a rather nebulous recommendation, to say the least, coming from a city under such cultural obligation to the British Empire as is Chicago. In her Great Fire, as some of us can recall, the city lost every book in its Public Library, as well as the building itself. And wasn't it Thomas Hughes—*Tom Brown of Rugby*—who happened to be in Chicago at the time?

Deeply moved by the catastrophe, Mr. Hughes on his return to England called upon all his literary friends to contribute copies of their works to reestablish Chicago's lost library. Her Majesty, good Queen Victoria, headed the list with an autographed copy of her deadly but inescapable *Life of the Prince Consort*. Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, Wilkie Collins, William Black, Charles Kingsley, John Bright, Disraeli, Gladstone and a host of others responded generously and soon a dozen huge boxes were safely delivered to the stricken city and the little library was soon open again with a fairly good stock of books, and on this modest corner stone she has built a magnificent and imposing edifice. Nor should they forget that the adopted daughter of Chicago's first settler, Kenzie, is the grandmother of the wife of Rudyard Kipling, England's idol; and that Mary Lester, a Chicago girl, was once Vicereine of England's great Eastern Empire—India. Much can be forgiven a city which bore Julia Newberry.

New York has room in her heart for all the far-flung cities her sons and daughters have established in all corners of our

great country, but she can't make room for all of them in one book. They must be content with the thought that they are never forgotten by the old gray mother on Manhattan and that the days when they return for a visit are always the Day of Days in her calendar.

A gentleman in Maryland also found fault with my wanderings because I didn't include some mention of the voyage of the *Ark and the Dove* from the Isle of Wight three hundred years ago, which carried the first settlers to Maryland. The only connection I could find between the *Ark and the Dove* and New York had to do with the recent tercentenary celebration of the beginning of Lord Baltimore's Colony.

As a fitting memorial of this historical event, it was decided to reconstruct on its old site the first State House erected in the little village of old St. Mary's City. In order to give a personal touch to this feature—a charming gesture—a small square of turf was cut from the old Yorkshire estate of Lord Baltimore and sent to St. Mary's, there to mingle with the native soil and become part of the lawn in the reconstruction. And, of course, this little bit of green sod had to be condemned by the very vigilant and alert Custom House officials at New York and ignominiously cast overboard in the harbor to mingle with that vast and plebeian aggregation of watermelon rinds, banana skins, decayed fruit and other sidewalk memorabilia bestowed by this magnanimous city upon its neighboring though unappreciative seaside resorts. As Randall might sing—

The despot's heel's still on thy neck,
Maryland, My Maryland!

However, the *entente cordiale* between the two nations was preserved by "Billy" Leeds who sent to England, by way of reparation, a little sweetness and light in the way of a good eye-full of musical comedy beauties. The Britishers greatly appreciated this courtesy, as was evidenced by the mighty

roars of applause which greeted one of the song hits of the show:

London's great, we're getting fat,
A nice fur coat, a West End flat,
From the Earl of this and the Duke of that,
Tra-la-la-la-la-la.

Here we are at a Swell Hotel,
Swell Hotel, doing quite well,
Breaking up homes, but what the — ?
Tra-la-la-la-la-la.

Since we're here and having our fling
Wherever we go, it's a funny thing
They always play "God Save the King."
Tra-la-la-la-la-la.

My learned friend, the *Boston Transcript*, is, alas, much distressed at my claim that the name America was derived from Richard Ameryck, one-time cashier of the company that financed the voyage of the Cabots. "Nothing of the kind," says the *Transcript*, "Amerigo Vespucci was not the humble ship chandler you claim, but a brilliant Florentine whose labors had already won for him the recognition of the geographers of St. Die who placed his name on their charts. We know the Florentines, and given a moment's reflection, could tell you what every man, woman and child over ten was doing every moment of the day or night between 1469 and 1500."

All of which may be true but bless my soul, Dear *Transcript*, I was born in Florence myself seven hundred years ago. I was brought up with Marco Polo, Michelangelo, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Benvenuto Cellini, Dante and Beatrice. I distinctly recall the night that Giovanni Boccaccio met Geoffrey Chaucer at my father's house. My father always said afterwards that Chaucer got his idea for "Canterbury Tales" from that chance acquaintance, but I have ever doubted that. Anyhow, I got my information about Richard Ameryck from Bristol, whence the Cabots sailed, and in Bristol they make material for Encyclopedias, besides cigarettes and pipe dreams.

Another good friend, the *Herald-Tribune*, says I wander like a cow in a pasture of hardhack. I had to look in the dictionary for hardrack and found Mr. Gannett was right. But if you wrote of London you would have the whole world for a pasture. I was satisfied to confine my wanderings to the United States, which after all is only another name for New York.

I confess to a feeling akin to sadness as the thread of my story reaches the Gay Nineties. They record, in one sense, the last days of another Pompeii—the last days of little Old New York. The proud name which she had gallantly borne for three centuries was now to be torn from her grasp. The last link that connected her with her days of romance, her Indians, her pirates, her valiant struggle for freedom, her Raines Law sandwich, was to be a thing of the past. No more was the little seaport at the mouth of the lordly Hudson to be called by the name which navigators, explorers and mariners had made known to the Seven Seas. In order to realize her manifest destiny—to become still greater—it became necessary to ally herself with Hunter's Point, Far Rockaway, Long Island City and the Bronx! The mantle of her shining greatness fell upon these benighted communities and now the traveler from Brooklyn is no longer ashamed to register from his home town, but gayly and at last truthfully inscribes himself from New York. The Borough of Manhattan may in time come to mean something. For the present it is a mouthing—a cymbal of brass. To the old New Yorker, the name New York will always mean the city on Manhattan Island at the mouth of the Hudson River and not the contraption of five upstart Boroughs strutting around in unmerited splendor as part of that ancient and honorable commonwealth, which Washington himself called "the Empire City"—little old New York.

THE AUTHOR

White Plains, N. Y.

July 1935.

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Brownstone Fronts and Saratoga Trunks

CHAPTER I

New York Rises Out of the 1835 Flames

WHEN New York City recovered from the stupor into which it was plunged by the Great Fire of 1835, an immense reconstruction began. Out of evil cometh good; and the immediate consideration of an adequate water supply now occupied public attention, together with a complete overhauling of the antiquated and ridiculous fire-fighting equipment. That the city was not entirely wiped out was no fault of the top-hatted, frilled-shirt-fronted volunteer fireman. But for the happy thought of blowing up the buildings, nothing would have saved the city from utter annihilation.

Pumps were few and far between and not equal to the terrific demands made upon them. In addition to that, water froze as fast as it fell; and reënforcements from distant cities that might have helped, were stranded miles away for lack of transportation. So work was commenced at once on the construction of an Aqueduct, as gigantic for its time as to be the eighth wonder of the world, the funds for this huge public improvement being raised by the sale of Lottery Tickets. It is laughable to recall that less than ninety years ago the great City of New York had no running water and that peddlers went from door to door dispensing this household necessity for a penny a glass for beverage uses. Cisterns supplied the water for laundry, etc., when they had any.

The smoke had hardly cleared away ere the rebuilding of the city commenced. And within two years all traces of the conflagration disappeared. As in all cases where a city has

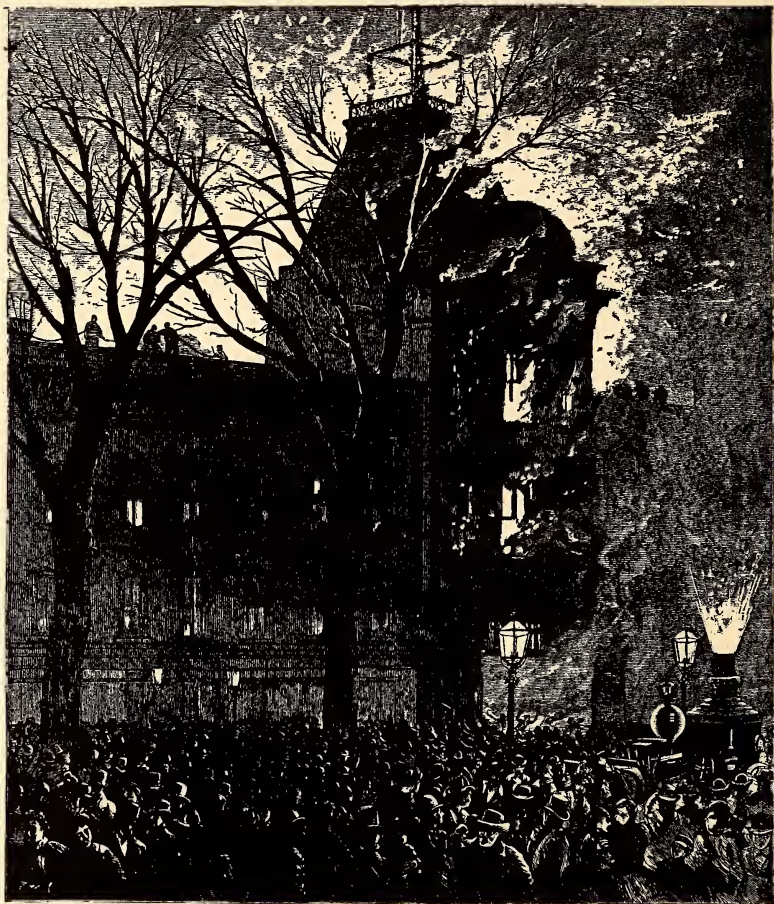
grown with the rapidity with which New York did, there were many buildings that were eyesores. They still yielded high rents and were permitted to stand. Streets and sidewalks were also in some cases neglected or overlooked in the pressure to develop newer sections of the city needed for the rapidly increasing population. Now, new and more costly buildings arose on the sites of those destroyed and the city as a whole was vastly improved—Wall Street in particular acquiring many impressive and substantial structures in place of the old residences which had been converted into banks and offices, and boasted of stone flagging in place of plank sidewalks. Some of these old buildings with their iron stoop railings which had escaped the fire, like the old offices of the City National Bank at No. 52, were still in evidence until quite recent years. Broad Street was at that time lined with warehouses and other wholesale businesses. A second fire in '46 practically wiped out the entire east side of Broad Street. It was the second major catastrophe in the financial district; and though the losses were not so formidable as in '35, they were still very severe. The water supply this time was much better, as the Croton Aqueduct was finished and the work of the firemen was materially helped.

Notwithstanding those severe lessons, New York clung to an antiquated system of volunteer firemen and observation towers erected in various parts of the town for the purpose of detecting a blaze. These laughable structures were little houses perched on stilts. The lookouts were supplied with telescopes with which they scanned the horizon from all points of the compass. When a fire was detected they gave the alarm by ringing a huge bell. The number of times the bell rang indicated the location of the fire. It was considered unethical for a fire company not in that district to commence operations until the company in whose bailiwick the fire occurred had arrived. Failure to observe this rudimentary law frequently led to sanguinary conflicts between the rival fire laddies. During this temporary suspension of fire-fighting

operations, the fire frequently gained disastrous headway to the great annoyance of the owner of the premises and the Insurance companies. The rivalry among these various volunteer fire companies assumed alarming proportions. Grown boys, partisans of this company or that, would run ahead to the scene of a fire and clap a barrel over the nearest hydrant and squat upon it till their friends arrived. What happened to the unlucky burning building was no concern of theirs. All they thought of was to see that their company got the first stream on the building to the disgust and chagrin of their rivals. Finally the fire losses became so great that a number of important companies considered closing up their offices. It was not until long after such cities as little Cincinnati, Boston, and a host of others, that New York consented to consider the matter seriously of a paid Fire Department. Even then, so great was the political influence of the fire laddies that they would not consent to legislation on the subject without one more demonstration of their superiority over a horse-drawn engine and over water propelled by steam. To the great delight of the fire laddies, their machines reached the scene of the test long before the horse-pulled engines! But, the fire laddies were so utterly exhausted by the tremendous exertions they had made, that they completely collapsed upon arriving at the scene and were utterly unable to connect their hose or turn a stream of any kind upon the flames.

The men on the horse-pulled machine were fresh and eager for the fray. In a trice they had their hose laid, their engine pumping and several streams of water on the burning building in a minute after reaching the scene. There was no longer room for argument. The Colonial system had clearly outlived its day and generation, and the Legislature soon after enacted the necessary laws to provide the city with an adequate paid Fire Department and the new fire-fighting apparatus to go with it. The last appearance of the volunteers was at the burning of Barnum's Museum, 1866.

Many readers will marvel at the effrontery of the fire laddies in thus compelling the Legislature to accede to their audacious and perhaps impudent demand for such a trial.



Burning of the Brooklyn Theatre, 1876.

But you must bear in mind that for over two hundred years the city had known no other system against the fire danger, and the Volunteers were a highly esteemed body of citizens.

They were bound together in a sort of camaraderie which is perhaps difficult for us to understand today, and they wielded vast power in local politics.

With all their shortcomings and all their defects, they were as a whole a valuable and brave group of citizens, and New York will always hold them in grateful memory. There is an Association of Volunteer Firemen now in existence owning their own building and preserving many interesting relics of these romantic days. Washington himself was a member of the little company in Alexandria and today they will show you down there, the machine with which he ran in the days of his obscurity. And there were many men in the city who afterwards rose to wealth and distinction who were proud of the fact that in their young manhood they served their city as one of its guardians against fire. Of all the changes that have come to this turbulent city in recent years, none excels in vastness nor spectacularity, the present fire-fighting equipment in contrast with the old.

But the old Volunteer Fire Department should not be dismissed so cavalierly. It was a serviceable institution and no organization ever performed its duty with greater spirit or nobler courage. It was no unusual sight to see men in ruffled shirts, long-tailed coats and high beaver hats working like mad with the pumping apparatus. No matter where a fire laddie might be, the call to arms found instant response from sitting-room or from barroom. Great pride was taken in the smartness of the machines and in the appearance of the fire house. Some of the companies enjoyed a wide reputation throughout the city, and the appearance of one of these famous companies at a fire was always greeted with cheers and a feeling that all was now well. It is not even wise now, late as it is, to single out any one company as being better than all the others. For the Volunteer Fireman's Association cherish the memory of these old fire-eaters, and their descendants are quite apt to hotly resent any claim of superiority of any com-

pany over the one to which some of their granddaddies belonged.

The Volunteer firemen served the city faithfully for more than two hundred and fifty years. Such a splendid record as that should not go unrecorded nor should it be clouded with the recollection of a pardonable stubbornness in adopting at once the newly invented steam engine. The old companies were flesh and blood. The new companies were machines. All honor, therefore, to the brave fire fighters of yore. They are entitled to a tribute of love and esteem. Which is gladly rendered. They were a fearless group.

The improvement of our fire-fighting forces was of course possible only by the introduction of running water. The construction of the great Croton Aqueduct, which was the direct result of the Great Fire, did more for New York, coming at the time it did, than all the huge accomplishments that have since succeeded. It is quite within bounds to say that no such gigantic undertaking in behalf of a city had ever before been attempted. Not only was there the great distance from which water had to be brought, but the undertaking of conveying it through a city built on a rock was thought to be impossible. But it was spectacularly successful and was the marvel of the engineering and scientific world for years. Upon its completion a great banquet was given, attended by the most distinguished savants in building then known to the world. They came from everywhere, and a more impressive gathering had never been known in the city.

The late beloved sachem of Tammany Hall, the venerable John Voorhees, took keen delight in recalling that as a boy he was one of the urchins who marched at the head of the procession that left the Reservoir at Forty-second Street and disbanded at the Battery. In some unaccountable manner, a pig managed to get into the crowd and being unable to escape on either side it calmly took a position at the head of the column and led the procession all the way. In a way it was

symbolical; pigs had done much of the street cleaning that would now be done by water.

Some rumblings of the coming calamity of Prohibition were also heard at that great dinner. The Temperance people on the Committee of Arrangements were strong enough to decree that all wines and liquors were to be banished from the festive board and only water—pure sparkling Croton water—was to be used in responding to toasts.

When Washington bade farewell to the sons of the Revolution at Fraunces Tavern, everybody got properly plastered at the dinner, and the bill for broken glasses and china was a lot more than for all the eatables and drinkables combined. Until that party, no one ever realized just what the British had been up against. The Croton dinner, though clanny, was cultured. The speeches were almost as dull—if that was possible—as those at a Rotarian luncheon, and everybody was glad when it was over. All the engineers patted each other on the back and the work of the Romans was blushingly admitted to be mere piffle alongside the Croton Aqueduct.

The Aqueduct cost a staggering sum for those days, but the revenue produced therefrom easily took care of interest and provided a goodly sum annually for amortization. Water was stored in a Reservoir located at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street. This venerable Egyptian pile was removed in 1907 to make way for our present library. The rear was a pauper's burying ground which is now Bryant Park, named after the poet who was the father of Central Park.

The Reservoir had a broad esplanade surrounding its four sides and it even became a fashionable and popular promenade. It was a fine sight in the afternoons and especially on moonlight nights when it was crowded with a gay and colorful crowd. On special occasions, fireworks were displayed at the city's expense, particularly on the Fourth. It was the objective of the fashionable afternoon drive from St. John's Park and the region around Stuyvesant Square, at that time

the home of New York's smart sets. The Croton Cottage on the corner of Fortieth Street and the Avenue could be relied upon for a light repast at almost any hour of the day or evening.

Three abortive attempts to introduce running water preceded the advent of the Croton Aqueduct. The first by Christopher Colles, the second by a company who had a reservoir on Thirteenth Street between Fourth Avenue and Broadway. The third by the Manhattan Company who built a tank in a building at the corner of Reade and Centre Streets, which was the fake reservoir invented by Aaron Burr in order to outwit Alexander Hamilton and procure a charter for what later became a bank, although ostensibly it was organized as the Manhattan Water Company. In the charter there was slyly inserted a clause empowering the water company to engage in many other avocations, including that of banking. This significant clause rested innocently among a lot of phrases that were generally accepted as meaning nothing in particular, yet were customarily included in charters of this kind. Such ambiguous phraseology would naturally pass unnoticed, as the charter itself expressly stated that its purpose was to supply water to the houses of the city. The huge tank we have described helped to carry out the deception and a few wooden water mains were laid. Only a few years ago, the remains of this phantom water company were unearthed during the excavation for the new Civic Centre.

The rage of Hamilton and his friends knew no bounds when they realized the trick that had been successfully played upon them. There is no doubt that this incident had much to do with the subsequent duel between the two men which cost Hamilton his life. But before that event occurred, Hamilton had the satisfaction of preventing Burr's election to the Presidency, in succession to Washington, by the narrow margin of one vote.

More important perhaps than its prevention of fire, was the

effect of running water upon the sanitary conditions of the city. We still clung to the pig as the most effective branch of the street cleaning department. Even the awful visitations of Yellow Fever, which decimated the town with periodic regularity, failed to impress upon our city fathers the urgent need of improved methods of removing garbage and other contributing sources of contamination until water was introduced. It was then freely allowed to flush gutters and streets. The health of the city improved materially, and the recurrent attacks of Yellow Fever were much reduced in virulence and ultimately were brought under complete control.

The epidemic of 1822 proved exceptionally severe and many of the scenes enacted in London during the Black Death were reenacted in New York. Business in the lower section of the city was wholly suspended. The great bulk of the financial section moved bodily to Greenwich. What we now know as Bank Street was a field of growing wheat on Saturday and a paved street with houses facing it on Monday. So many banks were among them that it was quite naturally called Bank Street. For a while there was serious talk of abandoning the lower part of the island and starting a new city in Greenwich Village, whose sandy soil promised immunity from this ancient scourge.

Looting on a large scale during the Great Fire was prevented solely by the presence of a few soldiers from the barracks and Marines from the Navy Yard who had peremptory orders to shoot to kill and investigate later. The Police force was a farce. It consisted of forty tatterdemalions dressed like ragamuffins carrying whale oil lamps and yelling the hours at street corners, adding that it was "a cold and frosty morning," or hot and rainy as the case might be. Nothing more primitive for a city of over two hundred thousand population could well be imagined. It was a one-man organization, but fortunately captained by a rather remarkable personage—

Jacob Hays. In his way, Constable Hays was a host in himself. For decades he had ruled the city with an iron hand. A strange and courageous character. But the need of an adequate Police force was now imperative. The city had grown from a population of six thousand to well over two hundred thousand. Yet he was content to govern with a force of thirty or forty tatterdemalions, who presented a grotesque appearance with their rattles, their lanterns and their feeble night sticks. Discipline was unknown. The constable was "Jake" to the people and to his subordinates. The clothes worn by the rattle watch were the prototypes of the tramp in a modern burlesque comedy. For a city as important as New York was even then, the assembling of the force for duty was a sight for the gods. All attempts to place them in uniform, to introduce some sort of authority was stubbornly resisted. It was considered menial—un-American and anti-democratic. Still, the necessity for a change of some kind could no longer be ignored.

Chief among the advocates for a uniformed police was the grandfather of one James W. Gerard, then a resident of Gramercy Park. At a fancy dress ball given by Coventry Waddel, Andrew Jackson's Secretary of the Treasury, at his country mansion on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-eighth Street, Mr. Gerard appeared in the costume which he had designed as a proposed uniform for the local watch. The trim appearance of the suit, the air of authority it conveyed, made a great impression on all who saw it. Renewed discussion of this proposed change found many fresh adherents and led to its ultimate adoption. The present dress of our uniformed police has been improved somewhat since the idea was originally introduced, especially the hat. But the old Gerard design is still carried out in many essential particulars.

The new Police Department met with the hearty approval of the citizens. Even the men themselves began to be proud of their neat and official appearance. There was no more talk

of flunkyism, and the new uniform was uniformly respected. In the case of the Fire Department, many years were to elapse ere the change was completely effected. It may surprise some readers to know that until as late as 1866, New York was still fighting fires with apparatus that today would be considered



The annual parade of New York's "Finest," 1885.

inadequate for a little country village of less than two hundred inhabitants. There were still many customs of the Eighteenth Century that were carried well into the Nineteenth. Civic improvements did not keep pace with the tremendous growth of the city and many archaic and medieval institutions still held sway.

Among other outmoded laws which the new Republic carried on was the one compelling every male sixteen years of age and over to serve a certain period in each year in the militia. In accordance with this law, the first of each May was

designated as "Training Day." And on that day every able-bodied male was expected to don his uniform and appear in his company at the Training Ground for inspection. The training ground as originally laid out was a square extending from Fourteenth to Thirty-fourth Streets and from Broadway to Fourth Avenue roughly. The present Union and Madison Squares are all that remains of this original huge training ground.

At first, owing to the two wars, '76 and 1812, military uniforms were the rule and not the exception. They may not have fitted well—some of them were inherited—but they were at least military-looking. By and by, these military suits gradually disappeared and all kinds of substitutes were used in their place. Discipline was lax, and soon the whole idea became a farce and finally only an excuse to get off for a day and get gloriously drunk.

The public became disgusted at such proceedings and pres-



A target company returning from an excursion, 1871.

ently the practice was abandoned. Such citizen soldiers as liked the plan formed themselves into National Guards and now form that reserve force of our Regular Army. Some very noted regiments came out of these train bands—notably the Washington Greys, the Blues, and the old-time famous Seventh. The city heaved a sigh of relief when “Training Day,” as an institution, disappeared. The two parks mentioned are a permanent monument to the old-time “train bands” and are therefore quite historical.

Soon after the turn of the century, radical changes in styles of clothing began to appear. The picturesque Colonial period, with its knee breeches, silk stockings and three-cornered hat, gave way to a hideous costume that even today excites merriment when seen in one of those good old Irish dramas in which the broth of a boy carries a shillalah, pot hat and green baize cut-away coat with a red vest and ruffled shirt front. The trousers were made of corduroy or gray broadcloth and were well-nigh skin tight. They were kept in place by straps which passed under the instep of a huge Wellington boot. Huge brass buttons ornamented the coat, the collar was more like a white muffler, and on his head he wore a massive topper made of beaver fur with a huge rolling rim. He wore a watch of railroad station dimensions, to which was attached an enormous fob ending in a huge seal of chased gold enclosing a large precious stone. The coat was of many hues, but lacked the rich gold embroidery of the past era and avoided the strong primal colors that distinguished its predecessor. Men just middle age and beyond had a sorry time on the promenade. Spectacles, invented by Benjamin Franklin, had not yet become popular. So they stumbled along as best they could with impaired eyesight. And many were the mortifying incidents due to this cause. The monocle, affected by the dandy, was not a practical device for the afternoon stroll and has ever been more ornamental than useful. The stout cane carried by every gentleman, no doubt acted surreptitiously to

ward off many a jar which would otherwise have resulted from miscalculated distances. The heights of steps and curbstones could not always be accurately judged. The high beaver hat with its furry outside had several shapes. The huge bell-



1857—Ball Dress—1807.



1857—Promenade Dress—1807.

like structure with wide rolling rim was worn by the older men, but the elongated square-topped style such as Dion Boucicault used to wear in the *Shaughraun* was immensely popular with the younger set. As a rule, these styles were a copy of the prevailing fashions in dear old Lunnon, which has ever set the pace for the fashionable New Yorkers with slight modifications, and probably always will. Lace cuffs and lace around the vest were no longer worn. Wigs, perukes, and queues were rapidly disappearing, but plain wigs to supply an insufficient natural growth continued their sway, unhampered by new decrees.

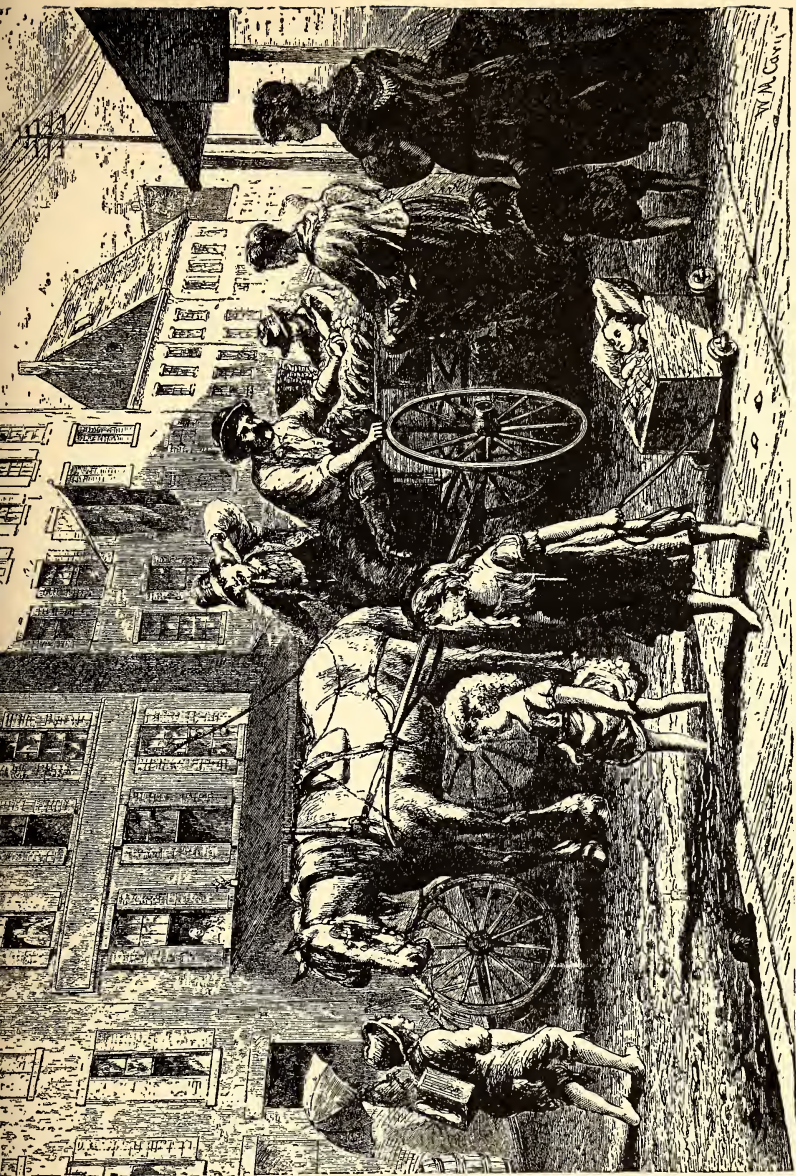
The women, as usual, were much influenced by Parisian styles and the advent of a new dynasty in France was reflected by a craze for Empire gowns, hats, etc. etc. Fortunately for our women, the Empire gown was very smart and very becoming to most figures. It had a high waist line and hung in simple graceful folds almost to the ground, but not quite. The sleeves were short and the neck was low. A long belt of colored silk ribbon hung from the waist and a small reticule was suspended from the sash. It was made of silk or less expensive material in plain colors and in many charming and effective floral designs. It had no billowy hoopskirts or other artificial methods of making the female form hideous and was altogether an effective and pleasing costume. Low shoes of silk or satin with paper soles were worn with this costume, and white silk stockings. Leather shoes, though much less attractive-looking, were certainly a great deal more comfortable and better suited for our climate. But the curious notion prevailed that they were suitable only for the "lower orders," consequently no woman of fashion would be seen wearing them. In spite of the fact that the whole idea of the new Republic was based upon the principle that all men were created equal, this stupid belief in the superiority of one class over another still persisted. Happily, that foolish idea no longer prevails.

The hats of the women were of the Maud Muller school of art, but went very well with the simplicity of the Empire gown. To look at some of these contemporary paintings of reigning belles, one must admit that they possess even more fascination than the beruffled and open back and face work portrayed by the modern screen favorite; and one sighs to think that Norma Shearer could not have the benefit of a Romney or a Gainsborough to preserve the art of the Twentieth Century.

Although slavery was supposed to end when we solemnly assured the world that all men were created free and equal, it was not until 1826, half a century later, that it was legally abolished in the City of New York. So New York's domestic help was wholly composed of blacks. They were a decent sort, however, and many had been born and raised in the same family all their lives. The women were neatly dressed in calicos with white or checked aprons and wore flaming bandana handkerchiefs on their heads, tied in a saucy peak. They were real old family retainers and did not at all correspond to the modern maid with her Thursdays out even if the heavens fall. The men folks acted as a sort of combined coachman, butler, window cleaner and handyman. Without waiting for legal action, most of the old families had long ago presented the old slaves with their personal freedom. Manumission they called it—and arranged satisfactory terms of remuneration. So the old slaves stayed on.

Even in the old days slaves were seldom punished by their owners. In case of a very refractory sinner, he was sent to the Calaboose where the jailer did the whipping for the modest charge of three shillings. But whipping was by this time practically *non est*.

Sand men peddled Rockaway sand, for kitchen and bar-room floors. They wore long white frocks and brought the sand to your door in two-wheeled carts. Water carts were everywhere on the streets. Not all the pumps gave nice clear



Street vendors of fruits and vegetables.

water like the celebrated Tea Water pump on Chatham Square, so the water cart man made a decent living. For laundry and other purposes, water caught by the cisterns attached to the houses furnished most of the supply. Running water in New York is only ninety years old, which is not so long ago, after all.

Peripatetic shoe dealers roamed the streets, their stock suspended on long poles, each shoe hanging on a nail. You didn't need to buy a pair every time. You could have a shoe for either the right or the left foot as you desired. There was no difference in the shape at all.

No end of young men and boys roamed the streets with saw and horse ready at a moment's notice to sell you a cord of wood and saw it up into grate length on the spot. Anthracite, the coal we use today, was first brought from Liverpool and was called "sea" coal. When Philip Hone opened his mines in the town called after him—Honesdale—he brought the first Pennsylvania coal to New York. But it was not in general use till the '40s and later. Gas was gradually coming into use, but whale oil was the standard illuminant. Kerosene didn't make its appearance till late in the '50s and not until the '60s was it sufficiently refined to be safely used in households.

We were still in the merry days of Dickens' *American Notes* when pigs served as garbage collectors and poultry meandered in the gutters, and great latitude still existed in the hygiene of the proletariat. No compunction was felt on the far East and West Sides in casting household refuse on the cobbled highways, there to be churned by traffic until some merciful rainstorm washed it into the sewers. Snow was never removed in these sparsely used districts, and icy mounds of filth and débris remained on the streets until the January thaw or the April showers. In the older sections of the city, the sanitary arrangements were still exceedingly primitive. Even the public schools tolerated conditions that would be

regarded as unthinkable today, and some of the best private homes had to pump water by hand above the second story.

In 1850 the State Legislature passed a bill making this a bone-dry State the same as Maine. The Governor let the bill die. He never sent it back and he never signed it. A new Legislature was elected that fall and the bill was quietly forgotten.

There were certain phases of public sanitation that recur to one who curiously enough was reared on non-Pasteurized milk, and has resisted the microbes of a generation that knew not antiseptics. The milk of my childhood was delivered in cans by a purveyor whose matutinal whoop came with the blush of dawn, and wakened the household. Bottled milk was unknown. There was, about fifty years ago, a "swill milk" scandal, when the New York authorities refused to allow certain alleged milk that was sent from up the State to enter the city, and there was a sort of civil war between town and country for some time, until the Legislature intervened.

Butchers' meat was also marketed with a degree of laxity unknown today. Carcasses and quarters of beef hung on racks in the street, outside meat shops, exposed to all contamination, and the nursery rhyme of Tom, the piper's son, who made away with the pig, was very often reënacted in slum neighborhoods. In the hunting season, Washington Market and others catering to hotels, clubs, etc., had rows of partridge, quail, canvas backs, mallard ducks, wild turkeys, venison steaks, bear steaks and small game of all sorts adorning their racks.

Many of our best families did their own shopping and went to Washington Market, a huge market basket under their arm. That penchant for personal inspection prevailed for many years, and Tyson's old shop on Fifth Avenue near Forty-third Street and Brandie's on Forty-second Street were often visited by the competent and careful housewives of the

'70s who liked to inspect the sides of beef, the ribs, etc., out of which the family dinner was cut.

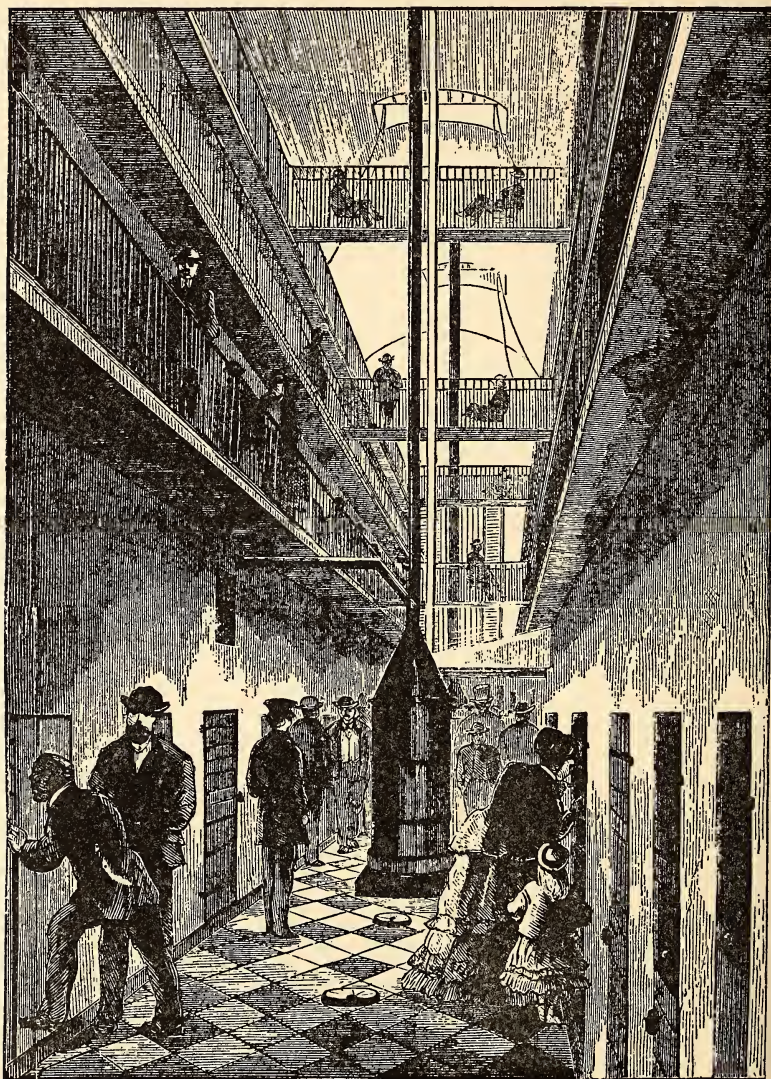
The sanitary arrangements in households were far from the pink and chromium creations we now have as bathrooms. The installation of interior plumbing was regarded at first, not only as unhealthful but very immoral, while the introduction of bathtubs raised grave questions in many local boards of health regarding the wisdom of using this new-fangled contraption except under the direction of the family doctor. New York is not officially on record as passing such sumptuary legislation, but Cincinnati is charged with having done so, and several other cities. However, even this innovation was gradually accepted. New York still has a respectable number of outhouses and the estimated number of the population still living without the benefits of modern sanitation reaches the rather staggering total of 60 per cent.

Other public improvements, paved sidewalks, cobblestone streets and Belgian block, asphalt and lastly concrete arrived in orderly succession. The telegraph made its appearance, and in rapid succession the electric light, the telephone, the motor, the movies, and the radio. All this within the space of a century, most of it in the last half. This gives you some idea of the tempo in which New York seems always to have moved. Personal comforts have kept pace with public improvements. A hundred years ago a toothache was a serious matter. The tooth was pulled out by brute strength; and if part of the jaw bone came with it, so much the worse. Surgical operations were too humble to speak about. The merciful anæsthetics of the present day were unknown. The vast majority of women patronized ignorant midwives, and the highly specialized baby doctor is of very recent growth and at the start was known for many years as a "sissy" doctor. So much for the innate modesty of the New York woman, who could not bear a male physician at the most crucial moment in her life and frequently lost her own in consequence.



Washington Market the day before Thanksgiving.

The Saturday night washtub was still a national institution. Dieting for health was unknown. Doughnuts reeking in lard,



The Tombs—interior of male prison, 1870.

pies with crusts that would sink a ship, and coffee that was but little better than dirty water made a favorite breakfast in New York, while whisky and corn pone was a staple diet in the South and Southwest. Cooking in all sections of the country was nothing short of criminal. Chewing tobacco, with its attendant filthy spitting, was well-nigh universal and the receptacles provided for the comfort of these tobacco eaters were a disgrace to civilization. Yet the well-known cuspidor or spittoon is still an article of domestic economy in many parts of our country today, though it has been practically banished from New York.

Drunkenness was the curse of the country. Beer, a lighter and healthful beverage, made its appearance with the great increase in German population and was a distinct improvement over the moonshine whisky universally consumed before its advent. The delightful and harmless drug store soda water soft drinks, which are everywhere obtainable today, were then unknown. Ice cream was rated as a luxury and could not be called an item of popular consumption, though its use in summer was rapidly expanding. But it was exclusively a hot weather dissipation. Tomatoes were at first classed with poison ivy, yet rejoiced in the somewhat seductive name of love apples. When their true health-giving qualities were at last recognized, they became popular and led the way to the introduction of other delightful members of the vegetable family. But boiled cabbage remained for many years the *pièce de resistance* of the well-dressed table—that and corned beef.

Butcher meat was abundant and choice cuts in steaks, chops, etc., were cheap and of excellent quality, while the product of the pen furnished ham, bacon, chops, pigs' knuckles, etc., in generous quantities.

The first departure from the stolid, uncompromising, heavy meals of roast beef, steak and potatoes, corned beef and cabbage, came as the result of the vast foreign population which

overwhelmed us in the early '70s. The Italians brought spaghetti, macaroni and other farinaceous foods. The French taught us the delights of sauces, light pastries and a varied menu. They also introduced wines as a light beverage and the Germans showed us that beer was more wholesome than Rye or Bourbon. The great variety of dishes and the daintiness of these foreign desserts was not passed unnoticed. We gradually adopted such items as best suited our tastes and gradually abandoned the hog and hominy régime. We added cheeses and relishes. And our soups were chosen for the flavor and not wholly for their filling qualities. In many directions the New York meal of today is indebted for much of its sweetness and light to the example set for us by the immigrant of half a century ago.

The era of individual packages had not yet appeared. All the great staples of family consumption were sold from open bags or boxes—sugar, tea, coffee, crackers, prunes, in fact, practically everything. The receptacles were open to all the germs that cared to visit them. No one knew about germs anyhow, so it didn't make any difference. Many of these articles were exposed outside the store and collected their share of whatever microbes were bestowed upon them by the passing breezes. The streets were not over-clean and the dust no doubt would, if placed under a microscope, have revealed alarming conditions. But our knowledge of sanitary affairs was still in the embryo stage. Such screens as occasionally shielded some outdoor edibles were not put there to protect us against dust, fly blow, etc., but to prevent the ubiquitous small boy from helping himself to such merchandise as attracted his fancy.

CHAPTER II

New Yorkers Sail—Educate—Build

It is practically impossible for the present-day New Yorker to visualize a city without transatlantic steamers, railroads, telephones, motor cars, subways, etc., yet at the time I am describing, the arrival and departure of a Liverpool packet was an event of city-wide interest. Crowds gathered at the Battery to see her unfurl her sails and like a huge bird sail majestically down the Bay. There has been a lighthouse on Sandy Hook since 1797 and one at Montauk Point since 1777. News of the arrival or departure of a ship was flashed from there along the coast, so New York always knew a day or so ahead of the expected arrival of a ship from abroad.

At first the packets had no specific sailing date. When they had sufficient cargo they left, and not before. Finally, the Ball Black Line announced that on Thursday of every fortnight their ships would leave for Liverpool, blow high or blow low, cargo or no cargo. Business, however, had greatly increased in cotton and was daily growing larger. So the exactness in sailing proved a popular feature. It became known in commercial circles as Packet Day, merchants' cash accounts on that day striking a balance and starting afresh the next. The Maritime Exchange was the Clearing House of its day.

When news was flashed from Sandy Hook that a ship was on its last tack to New York, there was great excitement in the Maritime Exchange. If it was one of the great California clippers, the feeling was intense. The latest news from the gold fields was always a topic of the greatest interest. Racing

between two famous clippers on the voyage to San Francisco also added its quota of excitement, as huge bets were made on the result. During the course of the race, some homeward-bound ship would sight the two contenders and note their position at the time. One might be two days ahead or a week.



The last good-byes: departure of a steamer for Liverpool.

But much can happen going around the Horn, and these reports merely added to the general hubbub. When it so happened that a victorious Captain like Cressy of the *Flying Cloud*, who had covered the distance between New York and San Francisco in the breath-taking time of eighty-seven days, brought his ship up to the wharf, the Captain was promptly hoisted shoulder high and an impromptu procession headed for the Astor House to open a few bottles of Croton water.

Rather important sums changed hands as the result of these races, and the Captains of the New York clippers and packets were men of importance in the city.

Ships that landed from the Orient rarely came in without the signal flying that indicated the loss of one or more members of the crew. The treacherous monsoons would account for some, pirates for others. But the chief losses were from sudden attacks by natives in ports to which they had gone for pepper, spices and gum. Sometimes they brought curious bits of news from the far-off world; one of them stood close into St. Helena—understood that Napoleon was in good health but that Madame was discontented and wished to return to France. The island was guarded by two frigates and a brig which constantly cruised around the island. Huge profits were made in shipping in those days and much of the "old" money in New York families came from that source. It was not an unusual circumstance for a ship to earn its entire cost from the proceeds of a single trip. Its return cargo was an extra dividend and ship masters grew rich rapidly. Although steamboats had been invented in 1809, it was not till 1827 that the *City of Savannah* left New York for Liverpool under steam. The Collins Line was the first to inaugurate a regular steamship passenger service between New York and Liverpool. One of its ships, the *President*, fully loaded, was never heard from again. This happened soon after the line was established. One or two similar casualties, though not so tragic nor so mysterious as the *President*, entailed such losses that the line abandoned the enterprise. The Cunard was the first of the modern lines to follow the Collins Line and they were more fortunate. They had no serious disasters and have continued in the business from that day to this.

Yet it was many years ere the vessel propelled by steam was able to match the yacht-like clippers and packets that contended valiantly to retain their position. But the rapid development of the marine engine and the opening of the

Suez Canal spelled disaster to the white-winged beauties of the Seven Seas and they have now all but disappeared from the scene of their former triumphs.

Some of these sea captains, particularly the Salem men, were cagey fellows. They discovered the little island off Sumatra where pepper grew and brought back 150 tons of it in one voyage, which netted 37 cents a pound. They managed to keep the source of supply a secret for several voyages, but were finally followed and competition set in.

Native Malays had a very reprehensible trick of "creasing" a sailor, i.e. hitting him over the head with a sort of huge knife steeped in a poison so virulent that the slightest cut would prove fatal. It is curious to note that in one instance a young captain, who had experienced all manner of hair-raising escapes on his voyages, was gored to death while milking his own cow during one of his rare vacations on land.

Few persons, admiring the imposing and beautiful buildings recently erected by our Board of Education for the use of the million or so children of school age in our city, can realize that the beginning of our present magnificent Public School System started scarcely a hundred years ago, the outgrowth of an idea by some public-spirited New Yorker who organized a Free School Society for the purpose of providing educational facilities for the children of the poor. A list of these worthy citizens is among the treasured papers of the New York Historical Society and if ever there was a Roll of Honor, that list is certainly it.

The city, as we have seen, grew with incredible rapidity, and it was soon seen that a private Society, no matter how worthy, was wholly unable to cope with a situation facing such huge development. So the question of public education soon took its rightful place as a responsibility of the whole community and not of a few individuals. The schoolhouses and the equipment of the Free Society were used as a basis on which to build and expand the Public School idea.

For some time, the city had been contributing to the expenses of the Free School Society. A hundred years ago, 1836, the number of pupils thus cared for by both methods was close to ten thousand and the number of schoolhouses had grown to fourteen. As classes were held in the evenings also, the total enrollment was nearly four thousand additional. The disbursements amounted to \$132,523, of which amount the city contributed a little more than half. Soon after this, the whole burden was assumed by the city, and the Free School Society as a semi-public institution brought its honorable career to a close.

The newly formed city organization which marked the beginning of our present Board of Education and built the existing Public School System took over the buildings, equipment, and followed the methods of instruction inaugurated by the Free School Society. The method then in vogue, not only in New York but everywhere else in this country as well as in England, France, Germany and other European countries, was universally known as the Lancastrian System—so called in honor of the little town in England, Lancaster, where the idea originated. From an official pamphlet issued by the Free School Society for the benefit of other cities desiring to emulate New York in this direction, we take the following description of the method of instruction and other essential details. The illustrations are from the same source.

The picture of a little child in our great Public Schools learning the letters of the alphabet by writing in a box of

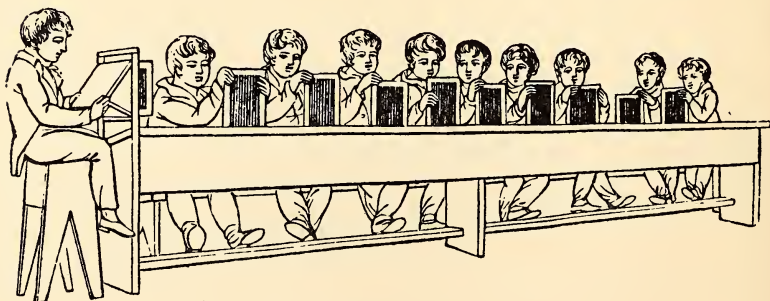


The Draughts school system.

sand; to watch the "smoother" with his flat piece of board then quickly remove the result, so that the next child can use the same sand, is not without its charm. It fits in perfectly with the little city of whale oil lamps, street corner pumps and pigs for a Street Cleaning Department. What a change! What a City! New York, the Imponderable!

There came into existence before long, a Committee of distinguished citizens who correspond very closely to our present Board of Education and we are glad to note among those names that of our friend, Lindley W. Murray, whose well-known descendant, President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University, ably carries on the family tradition with respect to educational matters.

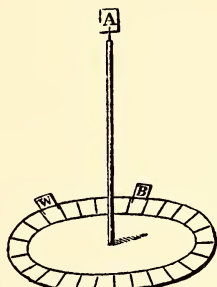
The Lancastrian Method had for its strongest claim the rather important one of economy. A schoolhouse in this system consisted of one large room with the head master at one end aided by "monitors" who sat at the end of each row of some fifteen or twenty rows of desks. The desks in the second row were about three inches higher than the first, and that arrangement was followed throughout, the effect being to bring the entire room directly beneath the eyes of the head master. From the illustration you can understand the plan. The monitors in time came to be almost teachers. At first it



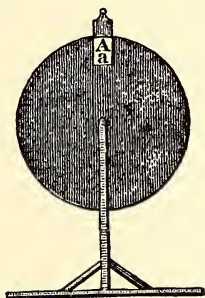
When a boy was monitor.

was an honor position, but later on it came to carry with it some specific privileges and a slight honorarium.

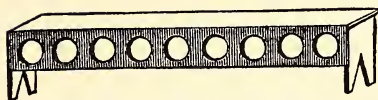
Classes would consist sometimes of five hundred or a thousand pupils. As the schools grew, assistant monitors became necessary to assist in arranging the different classes. For instance, the reading class would be divided into several groups according to age as in our picture. As assistant monitor, called a Lesson Fixer, suspended the lessons on the walls for the different classes and grouped the children round their proper posts. Then there was the "Smoother," the monitor who with



Moveable Stand.



Alphabet-Wheel.



Bench with holes for hats.

They, too, were in school.

a small flat block faced with soft leather, smoothed the sand in the box so that the next child would have a clear surface on which to draw her letter. Then there was the Dictator. He stood at the end of the room and gave the word to be spelled or the lesson to be read to the first monitor who would pass it to the others, etc.

Girls were taught sewing, heavy stitching, folding down sheets, as well as the three R's.

The Alphabet Wheel was made of two circular boards, each four feet wide supported in a vertical position. Only one letter, small or capital, was shown at a time, the others being covered with "sliders." The letters were copied in a box of sand and smoothed out as we have already remarked. There was a monitor for the sand box and pointers. Under each bench was a hole in which hats were stowed away during school hours. A librarian looked after books; clocks, whistles and bells marked opening and closing times.

Taking it all in all, there is hardly any department in the public service which has witnessed such marvelous changes as in our school work, and the city has a right to be proud of its accomplishments in this respect, even if it had done nothing else.

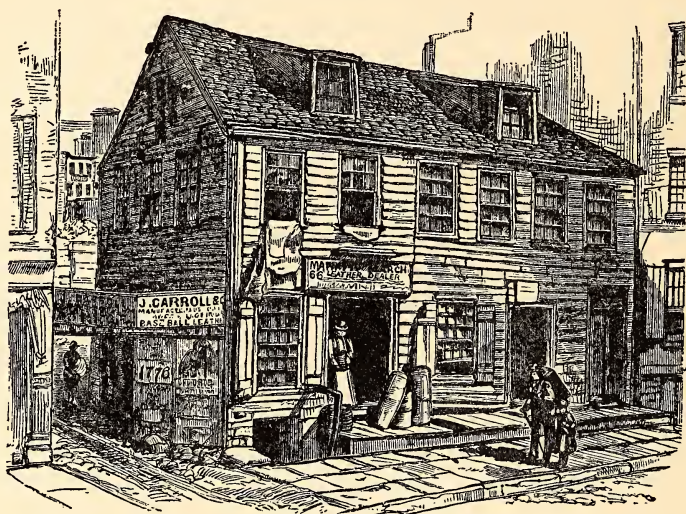
The architecture of the city was of so many "schools" that a recess was in order. Up till 1853, there were no professional architects, when Mr. A. J. Davis set up an office and announced that he had opened an office for this business and could be seen daily. The block of buildings on Fifth Avenue between Forty-first Street and Forty-second Street, opposite the Reservoir, was his first production. One or two of these still remain, but very materially altered. They stood on lots 25 x 100, and contained two stories of gray stone and an attic of brown. They had a series of curved fronts, very attractive, and were offered for the modest sum of \$9500 each; \$500 down and the rest payable monthly. They did not sell rapidly, but all were eventually disposed of. This venture is interest-

ing as the work of the first man who devoted his attention to planning and superintending the building of houses as his exclusive vocation. He was the first architect to make such an attempt. Mr. Upjohn, who rebuilt Trinity Church, was also one of the early members of this profession, but unlike Davis did not rely upon it wholly for his livelihood. Most of our building was the work of contractors who made a set of plans, hired the necessary masons, carpenters, etc., to do the work. Most workers in this field were all-around men. From laying bricks, they would turn to hanging doors and putting in the plumbing. They usually earned two dollars a day for what they called "journeymen," but \$1.25 or \$1.50 was the most the helpers or young apprentices received; hod carriers about \$1.00 to \$1.25 per day. Compared with present costs, these figures are still far below today's Union scale.

Under such conditions, there was a dreary monotony of design displayed in the residential section of the city where the depressing brown stone prevailed almost exclusively. The Mason houses on the block between Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Streets, then considered in an inaccessible wilderness, built of cream-colored stone, were for a long time the solitary exception. They were, however, planned on a truly gigantic scale as to size and number of rooms and one of them boasted of the first—and for a long time the only—ballroom in town. They were copies, if bad ones, of a type popular in Paris. It was then still considered good form to put a "crash" over the drawing-room floor when used as a ballroom, the heavy furniture being temporarily moved upstairs. So to possess a huge room that was left for three hundred and sixty-four days of the year in utter neglect and darkness with its gilt chairs stacked in a corner and its chandelier in a bag, was convincing proof that its owner was above the ordinary in a certain sense and condoned what might have been lacking in others. Part of New York has ever been lenient to those who had money and were not averse to spending it, and many a family

has been saved from innocuous desuetude by the possession of a gifted chef.

Until the advent of Mr. Davis, the architecture of the city was about what you see today as you view an approaching city from the windows of a Pullman. Why our American cities, usually alert to the importance of creating a favorable im-



Old tannery, on Frankfort Street, that stood in the way of Brooklyn Bridge.

pression on strangers, willfully spread out for his first view an apparently endless procession of tumble-down shacks, dilapidated dwellings and the week's wash invariably flapping in the breeze, is one of those mysteries that apparently has no solution. Rotary Clubs, like many telephone operators, greet you effusively and almost affectionately when you first strike their town and wish you a saccharine farewell when you leave; but the old depressing railroad approach to a town is still a permanent fixture.

Perhaps the buildings in New York were not quite so dole-

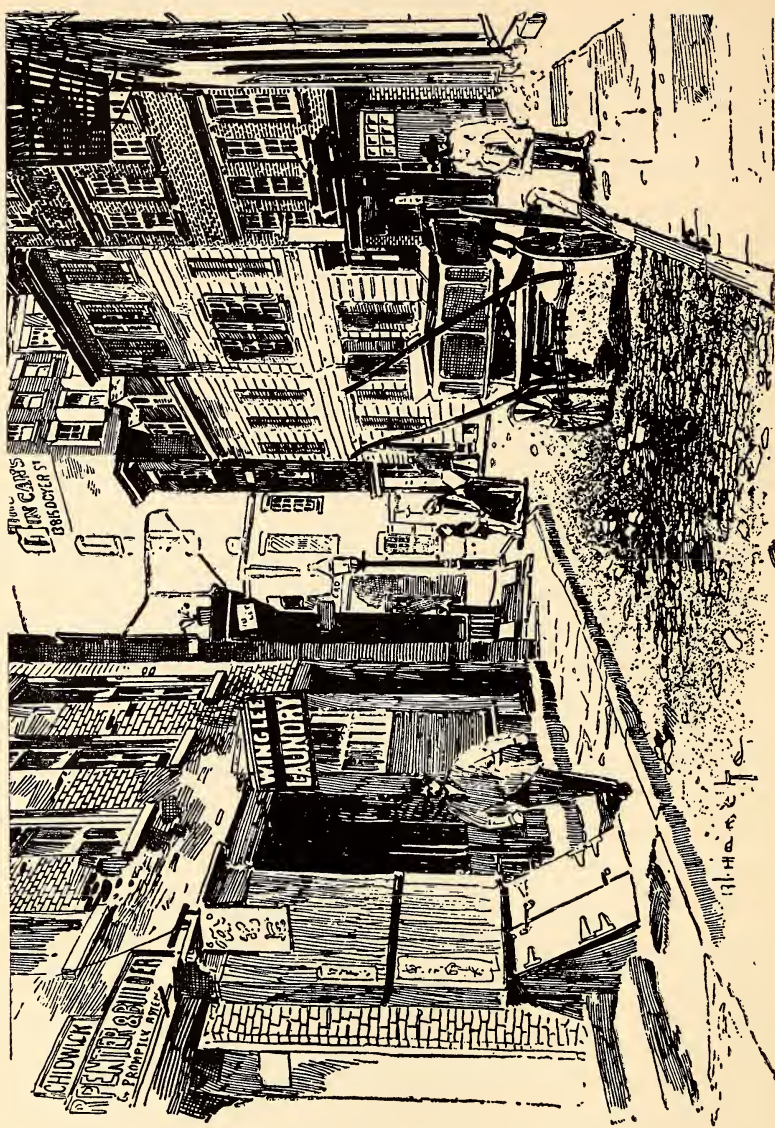
ful as that, but they still lacked tremendously any approach to attractiveness or architectural beauty. The home of the richest man in town, the residence of Commodore Vanderbilt on Washington Place, had enormous possibilities for gardening effects. But the Commodore was passionately fond of horses, a trait shared by his children, so the spacious grounds were utilized as a miniature race course around which some rather noted horses did their paces. There were no other houses in the city proper that had any land around them to speak of.

St. John's Park and Park Place leading to the College grounds had, however, shown the refining influence of open spaces near dwelling houses, and the style of houses surrounding these places showed an inclination to depart from the plumber and gas-fitter school of design. The houses on Park Place were commodious and in the Georgian order, and St. John's Park showed even a greater advance in individuality. When it was decided to make Potter's Field into what is now Washington Square, the houses that arose around it showed this tendency in a still more marked degree; and when Fifth Avenue was opened in 1824 there were two or three houses like the Brevoorts', Parishes', Roberts', Rhinelanders' and Minturns' that were true Georgian in design and very impressive.

Still, we were more anxious to improve, and sought help in every promising direction.

A Journal that exerted quite an influence on our architectural education was undoubtedly Mr. Dunham's Monthly. Mr. Dunham was a great friend of Frederica Bremer. She spent quite a little time with him at his summer home on the Hudson River.

Mr. Dunham strove to the best of his ability to raise the standards of design in the city and suburban homes—villas, he called them. Mr. Dunham, in common with most Americans of that day, was filled with loathing for what he depre-



Doyers Street—more like a winding alley in an old-world town than a street in an American city.

catingly alluded to as the vitiated taste that prevailed in house designing in Colonial times. A door designed by McIntyre, a building by Bullfinch, furniture made by such wood butchers as Duncan Phyfe, filled the righteous soul of Mr. Dunham with horror. Imagine such trash as "pie crust" tables or sofas with, of all things, "claw feet." Impossible! Simplicity of design resulted from vacuity of thought, according to the Dunham School of Design, so he popularized an era of flamboyant decoration for the exterior of a cottage such as was never seen on earth before or in waters underneath the earth. Scrollwork in every possible shape and figure, ornamental piazzas, towers, windows, doors, till your eyes ached. The more ornate the design, the more involved its conception, the more nearly did it approach the ideals of the ultra-refined taste of the Dunham School.

Nor did Mr. Dunham stop at houses alone. He was quite willing to share unselfishly his divine gifts for creating beauty in lawns and gardens also. Such a thing as an old-fashioned garden or a rock garden would have made him gasp with horror. He introduced the Sing Sing cropped grass and the lovely stags at bay in cast iron. In fact, he invented a whole menagerie of domestic animals—deer, Newfoundland dogs, elk, moose, etc. These were artlessly posed in appropriate spaces in the fountains in special designs. Those that have survived do not remind us either of Versailles or Tsarskoe Palace. They were not so ornate or so fantastic. A favorite design (in cast iron) was a very young girl holding an umbrella over her head, the water spouting up through the ferrule of the umbrella and falling in a graceful cascade down the sides of the *parapluie* to a basin in which the maiden coyly stood. Sometimes a frog would be introduced to provide, no doubt, verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative and sometimes a duck. Mr. Dunham was catholic in his tastes and strove to please. There are one or two specimens

of the Dunham suburban villa still extant. I think Mrs. Astor's "Beechwood" and Mrs. Cushman's cottage in Newport are genuine Dunhams. Mr. Dunham always designed a bay window for the best room. No home was complete without a bay window. This universal feature in all villas gave rise to one of the most brilliant witticisms of all time. I am sorry I can't give the name of the author of this imperishable contribution to our noble English language—a bay window meaning a gentleman with excessive avoirdupois in the region of the waistline. This *bon mot*, when it first appeared, caused endless gales of laughter. But, aside from its addition to the gayety of nations, the bay window was a window with a purpose. On a small stained walnut stand reposing on a filigree plush mat perched one of Mr. Rogers' immortal statues—either "Checkers Down At The Farm" or "Weighing The Baby." From the vantage point of a bay window these statues could be seen from three sides. And to own a Rogers Group in those days proclaimed you one of the elect.

Mr. Rogers made about thirty of these groups and the original bronze models are now in the possession of that excellent organization in Old Salem—the Essex Institute. I know it is popular to laugh at them, but I don't. Rogers' groups were not all genre. There is one showing Grant, Lincoln and Stanton—serious and compelling. The Lincoln figure alone has sent the price of this group out of the ordinary reach. If it had been of heroic size and placed in a park, it would have compared favorably with the work of St. Gaudens, French, or Borglum.

So if you still have a Rogers Group up in the attic, bring it down to the light of day and give it the best place in the library. They radiate joy and wholesomeness and give you a good chance to air your superior knowledge of art by making fun of them.

At one time New Yorkers raved over the late J. G. Brown's work. Mr. Brown painted scenes in which street arabs were

the motive—bootblacks playing craps—little coons doing a buck and wing dance for the edification of a group of “newsies.” Mr. Brown, like a gentleman in the office partition business, made his product by the mile and sold it by the foot. He was to canvas what Mr. Rogers was to plaster of Paris. Now we won’t even look at a Brown.

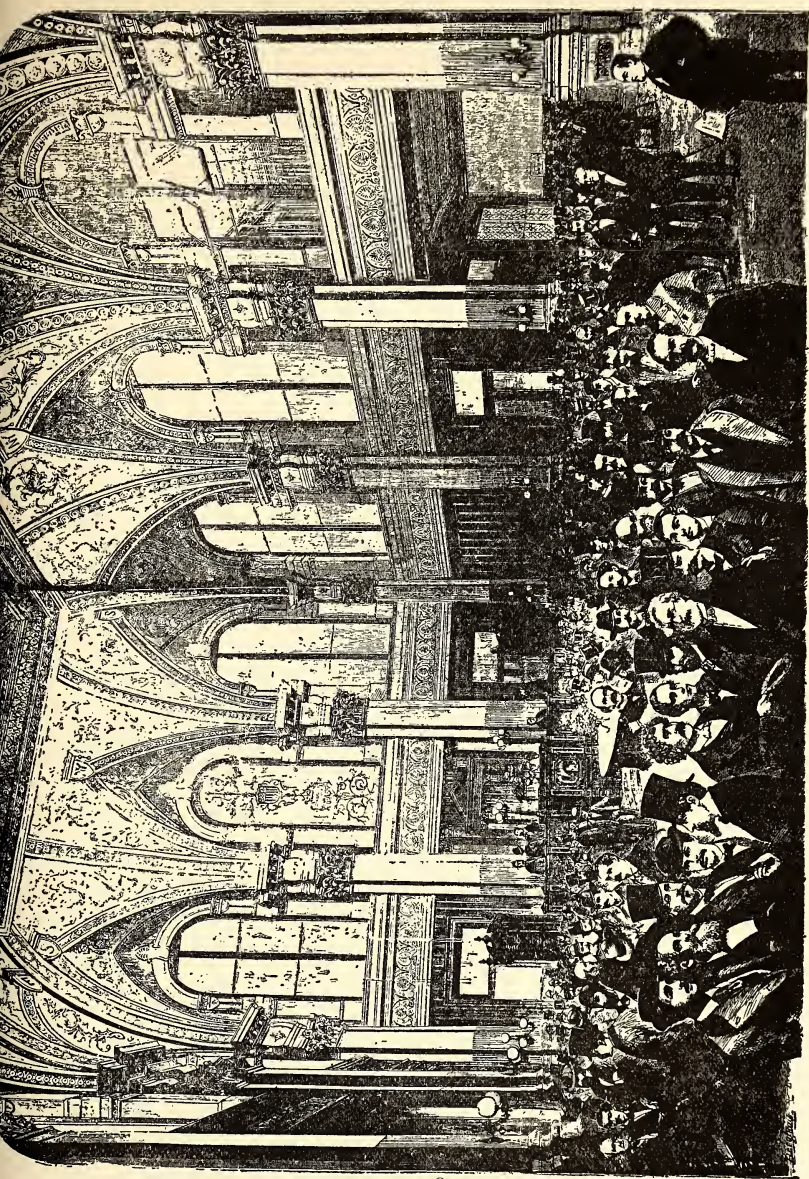
Architecturally, the city was still in the hands of a few God-gifted carpenters, plumbers and gasfitters, whose faith in their constructive and artistic abilities in building was such that they would accept an order for a Cathedral “like the one at Cologne” or an addition to a livery stable, with equal nonchalance. Builders of armor plate and iron clads, thrown out of work by the ending of the Civil War, were obliged to find a new outlet for their product and turned with contempt to the arts of peace. So downtown began the “iron front” age and uptown the “brownstone” age. The result of the former was the erection of such a melancholy array of business buildings that many persons thought that it would have been much less harmful to let the war go on. Specimens of this distressing era are still to be seen in the old dry-goods district; but their original claim of being fireproof having proved a fallacy, this school of architecture early became extinct. The brownstone orgy raged with unabated fury several years longer, was even more depressing, and is still much in evidence.

The other buildings of unusual note at this time were the Western Union, the Equitable, and the new Post Office in City Hall Park just finished. The Western Union was quite an institution by itself. It possessed a tall flagpole a-top the roof surmounted by a wooden ball. Promptly at noon this ball made an instantaneous descent to the bottom of the pole. Then everybody knew it was twelve o’clock. For blocks around, the curb would be lined with an eager throng, their eyes glued to the flagpole, watches in hand. When the ball dropped, out came a multitude of keys and everybody proceeded to wind

and wind and wind till the exact second was recorded. This solemn rite accomplished, the world moved on again. About a block below the Western Union, was a celebrated firm of jewelers, Benedict Bros. They kept an admirable timepiece conveniently displayed in the front window. This was consulted by thousands and provided an all-day performance of the wind-up act initiated by the Time Ball. The Benedicts have been jewelers on lower Broadway for more than a century and a quarter.

Then came the Equitable. At that time the company occupied only a third of the present block, but on the roof of their building was stationed the first Weather Bureau the city possessed. "Farmer" Dunn, as he was affectionately called, was the gentleman who first gained fame as a forecaster. Predictions in those days were nowhere near so accurate as they are now; nevertheless, Farmer Dunn and his prognostications loomed large in public interest. He failed completely, however, to give the slightest warning concerning the great blizzard of '88, but then no other service did either; and the storm itself was so overwhelming and devastating that we had no time for recrimination or accusation, in view of the mess in which we found ourselves. Farmer Dunn, who was popularly known as "Old Probabilities," held forth for many years atop the Equitable; and when the time came for his retirement and the removal of the Weather Bureau to the Whitehall Building, he resigned the cares of his office, secure in the affections of the people of New York and in the satisfaction of having done his work to the great benefit of the country at large and to the city of New York in particular.

The magnificent office buildings that now distinguish our financial district with their delightful groups of dainty stenographers, crowding the elevators in semi-sport dress, semi-ball dress and semi-nothing dress, are in striking contrast to the ex-boarding houses, ex-warehouses that sheltered the harassed workers of the days of which I write. With the exception



The principal hall of the Stock Exchange as remodeled in 1871.

of the new Drexel, Morgan & Co. Building and the new Stock Exchange, there was not a structure in this wealthy section that was other than an eyesore. Even the basement of the Morgan Building harbored a retail dealer in coal and wood—Mr. Jeremiah Skidmore—and the great banking house sublet the entire building to other tenants, reserving for their own use only the second floor. There were no elevators in office buildings in those days, and the Exchange Place Building in 1880 created quite a sensation when they installed one and announced its constant operation. Crowds went to see it. Except for Delmonico, who employed his own niece as cashier, there were no female employees in any downtown office in New York. There were no central heating plants. This essential comfort was provided by huge base burners which occupied the middle of the office floor and by grates. The necessary combustible to provide the heat was stored in a huge box in the hall. The Clinton Airtight Furnace was a popular idol in those days. The airtight feature prevented the escape of coal gas which smelled like nothing else on earth. This mouth-filling name greatly impressed one of the black janitresses in a certain bank, so she gleefully bestowed it upon her firstborn—Clinton Airtight Johnson.

The population was a little over a million, mostly Irish, Germans, Scotch and English. There were some French, some Spaniards, but no Italians to speak of. There were few—a very few—Hungarians, Russians, Poles, Armenians, Syrians, Czechoslovakians, Greeks and Chinese. There were also scattered here and there groups of native New Yorkers, but not enough to destroy the Elysian-like atmosphere imported by these European exotics.

All along Broadway from the City Hall clear up to Grace Church, the stores sported awnings of one kind or another. They were of all colors and no colors. Gorgeous stripes added a snappiness to the prevailing dull gray. A great many horse

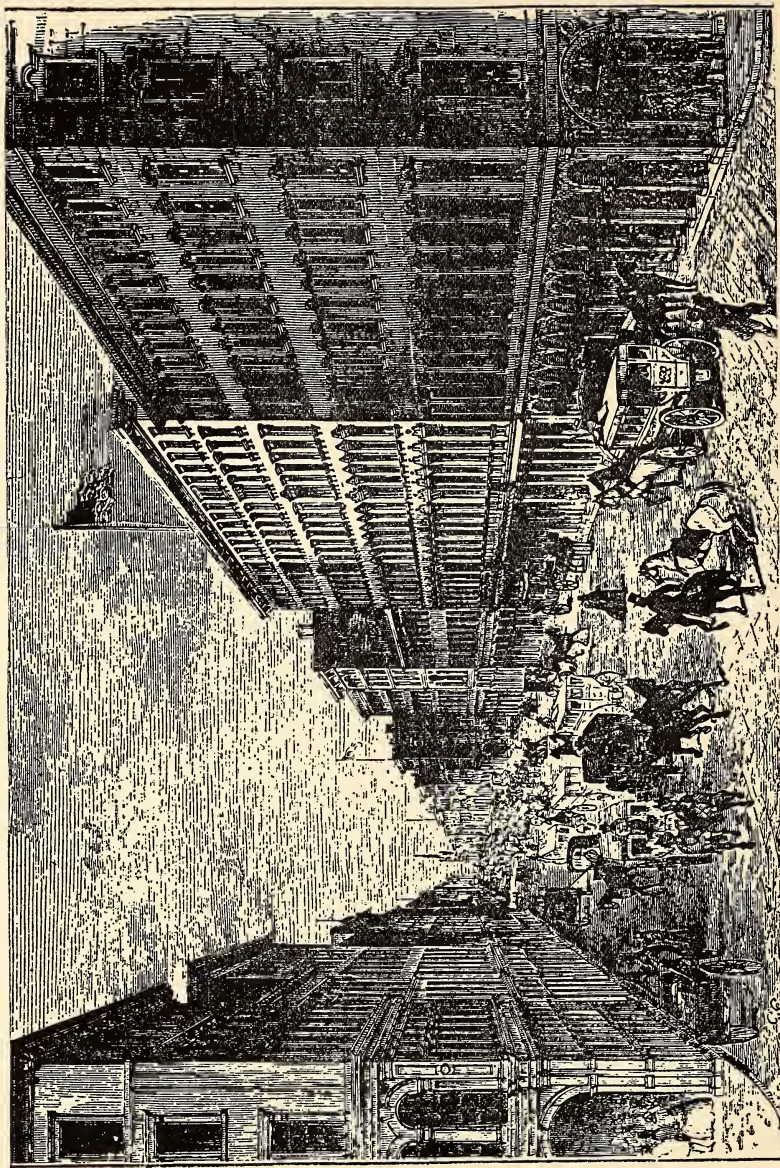
blocks still survived and some short front stoops in the upper reaches of Broadway.

The iron stanchions and wooden supports greatly impeded pedestrian traffic and they were gradually being removed. The stoops were shaved off and the horse-blocks demolished. This altered the appearance of our main street quite materially and provided much needed breathing space. Were the merchants to enjoy that precious boon? Alas! no.

Along came the Telegraph Company with a forest of poles and a labyrinth of wires, followed a few years later by the Telephone Company. Together, these worthies managed to usurp most of the light and air we needed for comfortable existence and calmly ignored local ordinances requiring them to put their wires underground. Finally, Mayor Grant personally chopped down a pole on Broadway near Twenty-third Street and frankly stated that a corps of professional tree choppers would continue the task. The corporations, thereupon, saw a great light, and arrangements were completed whereby the work would be taken up in an orderly manner so as to permit the continuance of business while the transition was being made. The spectacle of Mayor Grant wielding that ax will always remain with me a pleasant memory.

To close this brief glance of the Victorian Era in New York art, a brief mention should be made of one who contributed much to the art life of New York, but who won fame and fortune in an altogether different field—Prof. S. F. B. Morse, who lived on Twenty-second Street near Fifth Avenue.

When Mr. Morse first arrived in New York, he joined the faculty of the University of New York then in an old gray chateau-like structure on Washington Square founded by John Johnston, one of those Scotch lads I have spoken of. He was a penniless boy, accumulated a great fortune, and made a wise use of his money. Mr. Morse taught in the University, pursuing his art studies on the side.



The arcade plan to relieve the congestion on Broadway, 1857.

He soon discovered that there was no spirit of friendliness or coöperation among the young men in this field. On the contrary, there was much jealousy and mutual distrust. Mr. Morse immediately set out to remedy this deplorable situation, got a great many young students together and suggested an organization for mutual help and to promote a better understanding among the guild. The result was the formation of the National Academy of Design. He became its first President. It was an immediate success and soon boasted of the most artistic building in town—a replica of the Doge's Palace in Venice, located at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty-third Street, then the center of fashionable New York. The Society is now in the 103d year of its existence, and under the energetic administration of its present guiding spirit, Mr. Jonas Lie, bids fair to continue and surpass its long and honorable career.

There is a splendid self-portrait of Mr. Morse in the Metropolitan Art Gallery. It proves that he was an artist of no mean ability. Mr. Morse, however, accidentally became interested in transmitting messages by electric wire—an idea he had seen in Paris on a visit. Pursuing his investigations further, he finally invented the modern telegraph. I shall speak of him later in this volume. I mention him here because of his brief but brilliant career as an artist.

CHAPTER III

Literature Blooms in Nineteenth Century New York

BUT it was not our local publications that provided interest in New York for the outside world. There was, of course, in Europe a tremendous desire to learn more about the material prospects in the New World, and every scrap of writing dealing with this subject was eagerly seized upon. The long Napoleonic Wars had left the nations and the people exhausted and discouraged. The New World beckoned. Sometimes a group in England would subscribe a small fund to defray the expenses of a personal investigator. His reports were received and read with feverish interest, particularly with the opportunities offered to skilled laborers, artisans and all those who had mastered practical trades. The attitude of clerks in stores—whether they were polite and solicitous of your patronage or were so overwhelmed with customers as to provide indifferent service—was carefully noted. The alleged disappearance of all “class” distinction was a subject of lively comment; some writers rejoiced in the freedom from obsequiousness which the new order permitted, while others concluded that liberty was merely another name for license and complained bitterly of the lack of consideration displayed toward the merchant who was accorded no better treatment than a person of the lower orders.

There is no doubt that the democratic idea was often carried to extremes. A good many men—especially the younger—were prone to seize their hats and coats when reprimanded by their employers, and disappear. With efficient labor none too

plentiful, this was a constant source of trouble. Some of these young men went out of their way to stress a sense of their own importance. As a matter of fact, the average man never was treated with contumely in British days; yet now they were super-sensitive. A lot of their descendants are with us today; every office has one at least. Fine fellows, good workers and strongly capable. But oh! so touchy! You never know exactly just how to approach them. One day you wake up and fire them. Then the whole atmosphere changes for the better.

The immigrant boy was quick to discover that the Yankee boy was inclined to be needlessly supercilious at times and often threw up good positions unnecessarily. The Scotch boy saw that first. The Scot was willing, obliging and a tireless worker. All he worried about was getting on—a fig for the amenities! So in the midst of a city crying for intelligent help, the tide of Kilties which set in from the bonnie, bonnie banks of Ben Lomond, Sauchehawl Street and the Bromelow made New York sit up and take notice.

The Scotch in New York have been of enormous importance in the development of our city, and at the time of which we write they were by no means an insignificant factor numerically in New York's polyglot population. I would like to write a chapter on the Scotch in New York. But if I did, I ought to do the same thing for the Irish, the Germans, the Italians, the Russians, the Czechoslovakians, the Greeks, the French, the Spanish, etc. Still, this is a book about New York, and there ought to be something in it about the New Yorker. If I can work him in somewhere, I will let you know.

So these books that were written by these special observers and by others who were legitimately seeking new and good material for a book, attracted widespread attention not only in Europe but in America as well. Few of us along the Atlantic seaboard knew anything of the Wild West, and descriptions of Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and the newly opened Louisiana country, wonders of the great Mississippi, the

boundless prairies and the recently explored Oregon country, were read with absorbing interest. Lewis and Morgan's account seemed like reading the further adventures of Marco Polo. The whole world was agape with curiosity.

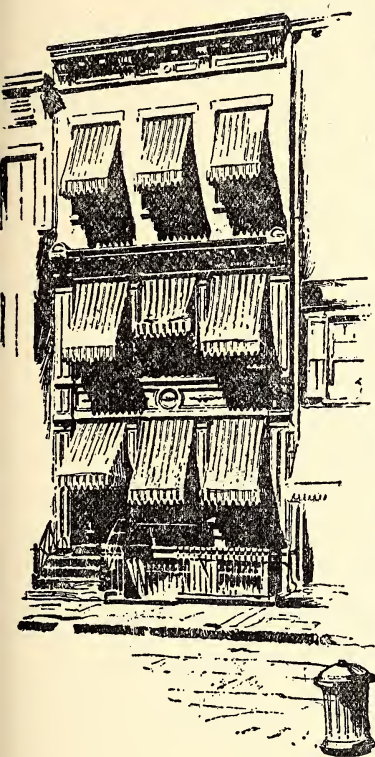
Strangely enough, when any of these books criticized us in any particular or failed to laud us to the skies, we immediately flew into a furious temper. None of these writers were actuated by any hostile feeling. They tried to present a true picture of just what they saw. Perhaps Mrs. Trollope and Mr. Dickens did not always use enough soft soap. Dickens in particular suffered severely for his *American Notes*; perhaps for a man who was treated so hospitably, he might have been more charitable. But tobacco chewing was universal and a filthy habit should always be condemned. Traveling in a country but a few years reclaimed from savagery could not be expected to provide such comforts as were possible in England, and the unending hordes of visitors naturally overtaxed a region as yet but scantily provided with inns or even cabins.

So some writers wrote under the stress of feeling induced by such vexatious experiences in a strain that was occasionally uncomplimentary. Yet the picture they painted was true, but unfortunately provided a basis for wholly unjustifiable attacks by the *Edinburgh Review* and other Tory publications in England. These articles should have been ignored, but instead they produced much indignation on this side and were the cause of much ill feeling. Some of our journals went so far as to denounce them as arrogant propaganda designed to create a desire on the part of the United States to rejoin the British Empire.

This peculiar sensitiveness to English opinion seems no longer to exist in New York. George Bernard Shaw tells us over the radio that we are a lot of boobs and we rush to his lecture, buy his books, and pay top prices to see *Caesar and Cleopatra*, *Candida*, and *Man and Superman*. That is as befits

a great cosmopolitan commonwealth and is about the most convincing evidence I can produce that New York is a real town.

Along with the growth of public education, the city could boast of not a few literary celebrities. It was Carlyle who remarked that lives of poets read to him like the criminal calendar at Newgate—and while we had no such romantic rascal



NO. 3 BEACH STREET, NEW YORK.

Where James Fenimore Cooper set to work on his second novel, immediately after the publication of "The Spy" had made him famous.



NO. 6 ST. MARK'S PLACE,
NEW YORK.

Where James Fenimore Cooper wrote "Homeward Bound" and "Home as Found."

as Byron, we had his prototype, minus the tinsel and spangles, in Edgar Allan Poe.

Sentimentalists are fond of reproaching the city itself for the cruel life which was Poe's while sojourning here, but the plain truth is that Poe would have suffered equal hardship in any community as a result of his own irritating conduct. Poe would rather say something nasty about an editor and live in a boarding house tenanted by the freaks from Barnum's Museum, than sell him a story at a good round price.

Thomas English, writer of the words of Trilby's song, "Don't You Remember Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt," was a special object of Poe's sarcasm. Brown had started a magazine which had for a motto on the cover the words of Richelieu:

"Men call me cruel.
I am not, I am Just"

to which Poe added two little words with a quixotic result:

"Men call me cruel.
I am not. I am just an ass."

He also remarked that Mr. English as a literary personage would shine far better as a worthy successor of his father's profession, that of a ferryman on the Schuylkill River.

Mr. English, it may not be inappropriate to recall here, attended in person one of those dinners which Colonel Harvey was wont to give whenever the Harpers launched a new edition of some author's works, dead or alive. He was then over ninety years of age. The crowd were singing "Ben Bolt" when someone suddenly discovered that the author of the famous ditty was among the invited guests. It was a tremendous sensation to find among them a contemporary of Poe's and a man whom they regarded merely as a legendary figure like Keats or Shelley, dead and forgotten years and

years ago. When the members recovered from their astonishment, Mr. English received a great ovation. His song was repeated over and over again, and I guess the old man had a moment of ecstasy that may have atoned for the many years of obscurity which fall to the lot of the man who has outlived his day and generation.

It is not possible in this book to add much to the already well-known facts of Poe's life. His was not a lovely character. The man who wrote "The Raven" and "Annabelle Lee" had only himself to blame for his unquestioned sufferings. That his superb genius was at all times equal to the task of providing him with a comfortable living, is beyond question. But literature must be sold to editors and if you insult every editor you ever heard of you make the going rather rough. And if in your capacity of editor you insult every author, then you don't get the material that will make your publications a success. Poe did both these things and poor Virginia Poe bore the brunt of the subsequent result.

When the cottage in which Poe lived at the corner of Broadway and Eighty-ninth Street was about to be demolished to make room for the extension of Kingsbridge Road, it was fortunately rescued just in time by the members of the Shakespeare Society. It has been restored and adorns a neat little park in Fordham near which he also lived for several years. The enclosure has received the distinction of being named in honor of this gifted genius. With all his faults his work seems likely to endure. His fame has immeasurably increased since his death.

Other well-known names which appeared in the literary firmament at that time were Charles Brockden Brown, the first novelist to gain distinction in the world of fiction. The curious Warner sisters, Susan and Anna Bartlett, who lived semi-hermitlike on Constitution Island, near West Point, wrote books, which for their day, enjoyed tremendous popularity, especially *The Wide, Wide World*, Susan's composi-

tion. It is interesting to note that Anna Warner and Mrs. Russel Sage gave Constitution Island to the Government.

A fine figure and very patriarchal was William Cullen Bryant, who lived on Twenty-second Street and was frequently encountered on Broadway. He was editor of *The Evening Post*, but found time to write occasionally a sonnet or poem that was eagerly read. His "Thanatopsis" was the literary sensation of the day. It is a glorious work and added no little to the growing fame of American cities in spite of Sidney Smith's sneering remark, "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?"

Mr. Smith should have been more discreet in his remarks, for at the time of this mammoth criticism, Mr. Smith himself consulted an American grammar for aid in composition and spelling, as the standard work on this subject then in use in English schools and colleges was written by an American and a New Yorker, Mr. Lindley Murray, late of Murray Hill, Fifth Avenue and Thirty-eighth Street.

Despite the fact that an American Sidney Smith—the adorable and always entertaining H. L. Mencken—says Washington Irving is not so much, the fact remains that he is today, next to Fenimore Cooper, the most popular American author in England where he first gained recognition for American letters. His biographies of Washington and of Columbus have no doubt suffered from the result of continued research since his volumes appeared, but his *Conquest of Granada* still retains a high position. His description of the Alhambra is as perfect today as the day it was written, and recently the town council of Granada named one of the principal streets leading to the Alhambra in his honor, and that part of the work is quoted and used almost exclusively by guidebook writers and tourist companies as the best and most scholarly description of Spain's proudest possession that has yet appeared. His *Knickerbocker's History of New York* still sells, and the play

based on his Hudson River story of *Rip Van Winkle* has delighted millions. Incidentally, it robbed the American stage of the incomparable genius of Joe Jefferson as an actor. The public stubbornly refused to attend his show unless he put on old Rip, and you were not competent to discuss the American stage if you had not seen his delightful portrayal of the lovable old Catskill souse. The W. C. T. U. used to froth at the mouth at the mere mention of Rip and insisted that he had been mainly instrumental in depriving us of the blessings of prohibition many many years before they were able to present this inestimable gift to their dear countrymen.

Mr. Bryant was quite a venerable personage when he presided over the meeting in Cooper Union to hear an address by the Hon. Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, whose great debates with Stephen A. Douglas had awakened an intense desire to see and to hear him in New York. Mr. Bryant was evidently less in touch with current events than he should have been, as he found no words to properly introduce the speaker of the evening whom he presented as "a lawyer well known in the West, Mr. A. Lincoln."

The real reason why Lincoln appeared at all was not so much to gratify this natural curiosity as it was to straighten out a tangle in which his son, Robert, was involved, having flunked his exams at Harvard. Robert inherited the spirited qualities of his mother, more's the pity, and was a vulgar-spoken, tobacco-chewing person all his life. He religiously abstained from attendance at any of the many dinners held on Lincoln's Birthday during his lifetime; he thought the President of the Pullman Palace Car Company a much more important personage than "Old Abe" and wouldn't play second fiddle.

But we shouldn't be too hard on Mr. Bryant for his unfortunate *faux pas*. The Committee, who were appointed to escort him back to the Astor House where he was staying,

were frugal souls and provided him with a five-cent street car ride on the University Place cars that ran to Vesey Street. They thought so little of him that one by one they excused themselves and got out when the car reached a corner near their homes. For two-thirds of the distance, Mr. Lincoln rode alone.

Knox, the hatter, who had a shop nearly opposite the Astor, made some amends. He presented Mr. Lincoln with a brand-new silk topper for the huge beaver one he wore. That was a hobby of Colonel Knox's, and the attic of his store on Fulton Street had a fine collection of old headpieces belonging to Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Calhoun, and many other celebrities of the day.

Another poet who deserves honorable mention is Rodman Drake, who is buried up in the Bronx. Drake wrote a really beautiful poem, "The Culprit Fay," with much of the beauty of certain passages in "Midsummer-Night's Dream." It should enjoy greater vogue than it does today, for it is one of those beautiful fantasies that are ever entrancing. For beauty of thought, exquisite imagery, and feeling of expression, "The Culprit Fay" is well worth a high rank in our national literature. The popularity of his other well-known bit of doggerel, "Three Cheers For The Red, White and Blue," has so overshadowed the "Culprit" as almost wholly to overwhelm it in popular estimation. In a pecuniary sense the antics of George M. Cohan with the American Flag have yielded far more money than poor Drake ever thought there was in the world; but Irving Berlin even with his "Alexander's Rag Time Band" hasn't written anything more enduring than the music supplied by Drake's lilting stanzas.

Drake's friend, Fitz-Greene Halleck, has also a permanent niche in our Hall of Fame. His lament for the early death of Drake, beginning

"Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of my better days,"

is quite a nice sonnet to read. But his "Marco Bozzaris," beloved of the amateur elocutionists, is the poem by which he will best be remembered, although I think he has a stronger

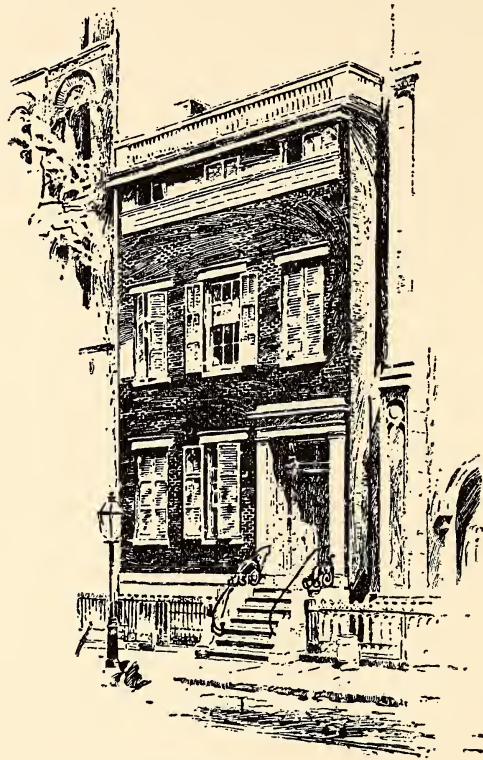


NO. 30 COLLEGE PLACE, NEW YORK.

Formerly Villagrand's hotel, the headquarters of the French refugees, and where Fitz-Greene Halleck lodged.

and better claim in the affections of old New York. He was confidential clerk to the first John Jacob Astor, and I imagine played no small part in the early stages of founding the Astor Library. His own tastes would incline him to a project of

this kind and doubtless he was a warm advocate of the project whenever the matter came up. Washington Irving had a hand in it too, as his name appears among those of the first



NO. 141 FOURTH STREET, NEW YORK.

*N. P. Willis bought the house in 1850
and lived there until he moved to his
ideal residence on the Hudson River.*

Board of Trustees. He was also a close friend of the Astors. Both of them deserve well of the city for their good work in this direction.

It is not my purpose to more than glance at a few names

that flourished prominently in the literary world in the early half of the last century in New York. Many more might be included with equal justice. There were one or two literary journals that should be mentioned, particularly *The Mirror* under the editorship of Nathaniel P. Willis and William A. Morris, gentlemen of rare literary culture and ornaments of their profession. *The Mirror* enjoyed a long and prosperous career, but finally succumbed to changing tastes as is the fate of many publications when the controlling spirits that brought them into existence have disappeared from the scene. There are many good articles in the old *Mirror* that reflect the time and tastes of New York at that time, one of the best of which describes a trip across the East River to Brooklyn on the ferryboats then existing.

It is not pleasant, nor is it sometimes safe, to cross a river in a ferryboat crowded with carriages, carts, horses, etc., and we have often wondered why separate and distinct boats were not provided for the accommodation of all parties, more particularly at a ferry so much frequented as that at the foot of Fulton Street. The decks of these boats are not unfrequently jammed with a heterogeneous mass of live and dead stock; hucksters and their miscellanies; milkmen with their pans; hay-carts, wagons, drays, men, women, children, pigs, sheep, ducks, pigeons, geese, eggs, hens, clean and unclean things, all promiscuously huddled together, and affording a miniature view of the interior of the ark of old. This might be obviated by appropriating the present boats exclusively to the accommodation of the market people, and such others as may have produce or merchandise to transport in vehicles or otherwise; and by adding a couple of neat and comfortable boats, with warm and commodious deck apartments, for the exclusive conveyance of unencumbered pedestrians. This ought to be done, and at this season of the year iceboats should be procured, and, in short, every facility afforded the public by the holders of a monopoly so lucrative as the Fulton-street ferry-company.

Two books appeared at this time, the work of New York

men, which have endured since then and so far as we can see will probably be with us for all time. One of these is Audubon's *Birds of America* and the other is *The Hudson River Portfolio* by Hill and Wall. Original editions of these works now command prices in relatively the same classes as Shakespeare's first folios or the Gutenberg Bible.

Audubon's home was in the little village of Carmansville, which was long ago swallowed up by the city. His old home, "Minniesland," stood until recently just below the viaduct at Broadway and One Hundred Fifty-fifth Street, near Mr.



FRONT VIEW OF NO. 87 WHITE STREET.

Where Audubon lived in 1840.

Huntington's Spanish Museum. Part of his old farm is now Trinity Cemetery and his grave is there. When Morse built his first telegraph line to Philadelphia, he had it strung across the river to the basement of Audubon's house. Thus was the first message sent to New York.

Audubon's life is a story of unbelievable achievement under most extraordinary perils and adventures. Year after year was spent in the forests primeval, sketching from life the specimens which were later to delight and astonish the world by their accuracy in both form and color. His drawings were reproduced in life-size in what is called *Elephant Folio*—measuring about two and a half feet by four. Few copies of this first edition are now extant in private libraries, practically all of them being in public libraries or museums.

Early views of Audubon's home on One Hundred Fifty-fifth Street, which extended to the river and had considerable shore front, shows a square wooden structure of no architectural beauty whatever—square, with Mansard roof and the inevitable front stoop and porch. He kept a few tame deer, some peacocks and other unusual birds and animals, which are shown in these old prints, standing on the lawn.

Audubon's work awakened a world-wide interest in bird life and to his influence we owe our present widely organized Audubon Societies whose sole purpose is the care and protection of our lovely feathered friends. Our State and National Bird Sanctuaries are also part of the same work. Altogether, John James Audubon was a notable New Yorker. A copy of the first edition of his *Birds* containing the list of patrons, whose support made this monumental work possible, is in the possession of the New York Historical Society, where many of the original drawings themselves can also be seen.

The artists who made the *Hudson River Portfolio* are perhaps better known for the few sketches they also made of scenes in the city itself—the view of Broadway and Canal Street (1835) being one of the best-known subjects and

rarest. The *Portfolio* consists of a series of large mezzotints, twenty-two in all, depicting scenes along the Hudson River, beginning with a view of the city from the Bay and continuing up the River to its source in the Adirondacks. West Point, Newburgh, Troy and other cities are shown.

Where the money came from to support such an enterprise at this early date is a mystery. Certainly no such costly and magnificent work of this lordly River ever appeared before or since. An excellent copy in good condition is quoted in London today at \$2500. It rarely appears in the auction rooms, and when it does is usually short one or two plates. Part of the edition bears the imprint of a Charleston firm as printers, part by H. J. Megary & Son, a New York firm, and some were printed in London. Considering the time in which it appeared, it is remarkable that a market should be found for such an expensive publication. A new one today on the same elaborate scale has lately been projected, but conditions financially have temporarily suspended operations. But both these publications originating in New York, are among the prize possessions of the bibliophiles the world over and are worthy of recording in these pages.

Herman Melville, whose *Moby Dick* is now a sea classic, was born and lived at 104 East Twenty-sixth Street where he wrote it and other famous novels.

"The Old Oaken Bucket," by Samuel Woodworth, was inspired by the pump that stood before his door in Duane Street.

John Howard Payne was born at 33 Pearl Street near Whitehall. In 1845, his opera containing "Home, Sweet Home" was sung at La Scala, in Milan.

The Mercantile Library was started in 1830, with the gift of a *History of England* by Geo. De Witt Clinton. The Century Club was founded by William Cullen Bryant in the house at Fifteenth Street, between Irving Place and Union Square.

Ray Palmer, in a room overlooking old St. Paul's, found inspiration for that beautiful hymn, "My Faith Looks Up To Thee."

Dr. Muhlenberg, rector of the Church of the Holy Communion, announced one morning that half the collection would be set aside for an organization to care for the sick poor. That was the origin of St. Luke's Hospital, now on Cathedral Heights.

Robert Louis Stevenson, coming off the steamer, stopped at 10 West Street.

Bryant and Robert C. Sands founded *The Atlantic Monthly* with Verplanck. All were members of the Bread and Cheese Club founded by J. Fenimore Cooper in old Washington Hall, Broadway between Chambers and Reade Streets, afterwards A. T. Stewart's store.

"Woodman, Spare That Tree," was penned by George P. Morris.

Two women have so far written the best histories of the City of New York—Mary L. Booth and Martha C. Lamb. No male writer has ever equalled them.

In addition to John Johnston who founded the University of the City of New York, his son-in-law, John Taylor, who founded the Metropolitan Museum of Art, should be mentioned the name of James Lenox, son of another Scotchman, Robert Lenox, whose priceless library forms one of the foundations of our present New York Public Library.

Mr. Harry L. Stevens, who acted as literary agent for Mr. Lenox, in assembling his priceless treasures, has written a most interesting short biography of this first and greatest of New York's distinguished bibliophiles.

Mr. Stevens enumerates many of the great jewels of literature included in the Lenox Collection. I am, like most of us, tolerably familiar with the contents of many of these rarities. Yet upon careful consideration and unbiased reflection, I find none among them more fascinating, more utterly

satisfying than a short monograph written by Mr. Robert Lenox himself. It is not included in the son's collection, and the only copy extant is in the records of the Surrogate's Court in the County of New York. It is a description of a certain tract of land—some three hundred acres, to be exact—which Mr. Lenox purchased from the city anxious to dispose of some "surplus public land" at the time. The tract lies east of Central Park and extends north of Seventy-third Street about a mile and west to Madison Avenue. Mr. Lenox wrote to his children begging them to be guided by his advice. Being Scotch, in whom family affection is deep and abiding, they heeded his words. This property, except for some donated to hospitals, etc., etc., is still in possession of the Lenox Estate.

CHAPTER IV

Great Journalism Makes New York Greater

TURNING from the field of literature for a moment, let us glance at its handmaiden—journalism. Beginning with William Bradford, who established the first newspaper in New York, the city has always possessed one or two journalists of outstanding ability whose publications afforded them an excellent outlet for their astounding personalities.

Alexander Hamilton, dissatisfied with the spasmodic appearances of the pamphlet school of journalism, founded the modern school with the *Evening Post*, which continues to this day. But the most picturesque figures in the early half of the Nineteenth Century were undoubtedly James Gordon Bennett of the *Herald*, and Horace Greeley of the *Tribune*. In the art of gathering news, Bennett was undoubtedly the greatest publisher of his day. There was never any great moral purpose behind his work as in the case of Greeley, nor of public service as in the later cases of George Jones, of the *Times*, or of Godkin and Pulitzer. Whether GBS took a leaf out of Bennett's *Herald* we do not know; but a short illustration of the Bennett style is strangely suggestive of Shavism. Mr. Bennett is reviewing the city as it looked to him in 1835. He writes in part:

We pay 12 millions into the public treasury and expend by the city government alone one and a half millions a year, part of it in poor house champagne dinners. We had in 1834 9,082 deaths; births and marriages unknown and unnumbered. We have in the

city directory the names of 10,038 mechanics and probably 25,000 not in the directory. We have in the same directory a total of 35,510 names of which 1592 are cartmen, 2704 grocers, 3751 mechanics and over 4,000 widows, many of them fat, fair and forty and willing to marry again. We have 36 daily papers, 16 of which issue 17,000 large sheets a day and 25,000 small, the best large morning sheet being the *Courier and Enquirer* and the best small one the *Morning Herald*. We manufacture goods to the amount of 25 millions a year and sell at auction 40 millions.

We value the gross amount of our real and personal property from New York to Buffalo at 460 millions. We have 566 miles of canal and 100 miles of railroad and all in use, and yielding a revenue of one and a half million a year, and only 3 millions in debt. We have projected 400 miles of canals, and incorporated railroads to an amount of 34 millions both of which are intended for speculation and the taking of the *flats*. We have 89 banks with a capital of 35 millions, a circulation of 17 millions, specie in vault 10 millions, public and private deposits 1 million, and loaned out at interest 85 millions. We have had heretofore only 8 broken banks, with a capital of 5 millions to cheat the mechanics, but in time we may break hereafter a score or two, and thus far outstrip Pennsylvania, Ohio or Kentucky in the art of rifling the poor. We have 6 or 7 colleges, all poor and proud, except Columbia, which is rich and lazy—educating only 100 students a year and yet complaining of hard work. We have 8 or 10 Theological seminaries, for making clergymen, 90 out of 100 of which would make good tillers of the ground. We have over 50 female academies for finishing the education of young ladies, where one-half of the number are “finished,” as we once heard John Randolph of Roanoke say in the House of Representatives, in his flageolet-sounding voice—“finished Mr. Speaker; yes sir, finished for all useful purposes.” We have in State prison 1,492 rogues, but God only knows how many out of prison, preying upon the community in the shape of gamblers, blacklegs, speculators and politicians. We have 6,457 paupers in the poor-house, and double that number going there as fast as intemperance and indolence can carry them. We have about 500 dandies who dress well, wear gold chains, spend first their fathers’ earnings, then their tailor’s, and hotel keeper’s and close their career with a pistol or a glass of laudanum. We have 249 people of fashion, who had an unquestionable grandfather and grandmother and 750 parvenues who

like Melchizedick, King of Salem, have neither father nor mother. We buy and sell of each other, in Wall Street, 300 millions of stocks a year, and by the operation only ruin 100 families to make the fortune of 5 or 10 overgrown ones.

And to close all we have twenty-three States and 3 territories lying to the South, the West and East more or less tributary to New York, getting from us our foreign and domestic goods, our fashions, our newspapers, our politics, our thoughts, in exchange for their cotton, their rice, their tobacco, their wheat, their corn, their coal, and "though last not least," their electoral votes.

Here's an "empire state" for ye! And yet one half of its magnificence, greatness, power, etc., is behind the curtain and unrevealed till 1845. Scholars talk and twaddle about the States of Greece—the supremacy of Athens—the moral grandeur of Sparta—the magnificence of republican Rome. Mere shadows to New York as she is and means to be.

In this diverting article, we have a few pictures of New York a century ago, that are direct and illuminating. Many of our readers will be surprised at the large item forty millions, the result of auction sales, forgetting that much business was then conducted in this manner. Few goods were bought direct by merchants from foreign ports. Most of it was disposed of on the docks upon arrival and paid for in cash. All the dealers would next day advertise that they had just received from packet so and so, a large consignment of sheetings, brandy, hardware, calico, rum, etc. We were still in the sailing ship era and no telegraphs. Some of these ships brought cargoes picked up along the coasts of Africa, Central America, India, China, and the Orient. Trade was still in a primitive state and ships sailed from New York with cash and miscellaneous stuffs to barter with the natives of unknown lands; so with the tea and spice merchants of the West India Islands. And similar ships with their miscellaneous cargoes would reach New York there to find a market.

Mr. Bennett notes the absence of vital statistics and also questions the accuracy of the directory. No doubt, many

names were omitted, as directory-making was as yet in its infancy. Our directory, even now, is only a little over one hundred and fifty years old, while London's is over eleven hundred. Taking it by and large, Mr. Bennett's description is a very excellent photograph of our city at a most engaging period of its development and is historically of great value.

Bennett's great contribution to New York journalism was, undoubtedly, his enterprise in the direction of scientific expeditions, notably in sending out Stanley in conjunction with the *London Telegraph* to find Livingstone. That still remains an epic in journalism.

Stanley, then a young man in his twenties, was attached in a minor capacity to the *Herald* in London, as one of its foreign correspondents. At the time of his appointment, he was simply one of a thousand young men in the British Metropolis, but the fierce light that beats upon a throne was his when Bennett's selection became known. It was a hazardous undertaking and called for a man of rare courage, unquestioned stamina and robust health. As it turned out, young Stanley possessed all three.

Last summer while driving through Wales, I saw the little cottage in which Stanley had passed a very bleak boyhood as an inmate of the most desolate of all places—a public refuge for destitute children. They had not even the sorrowful title of orphan; they had come into this world without benefit of clergy and dwelt in that kindly atmosphere provided by a penurious and moralistic community, who discharged their duty to these friendless little waifs not only with economy, but with a consciousness of having discharged a duty which entitled them to beam upon themselves and congratulate the poor children on their happy (but doubtless unappreciated) fate.

In such a glowing atmosphere of kindness and affection, Stanley passed most of childhood's happy hours. As soon as he was old enough to look after himself in a vague way, he

showed his great sense of gratitude for the care shown him by promptly running away, and working for his keep on a farm. This was not the Elysian he sought, so he made his way to that league of all nations—the waterfront docks of Liverpool, and found himself presently on board a sailing vessel bound for that Land of Eldorado—America. Life aboard a tramp sailing vessel was, if anything, more cruel than on a farm in Wales. So when he reached the port of destination, he abandoned the pitiful sum to which he was entitled and deserted the ship. It must have been a frightful experience, as Stanley ever after bore a deep and abiding hatred of the sea. It probably needed just such a background as this to prepare him for the frightful privations and perils which were inseparable from such an undertaking as a trek through tropical country amidst every possible danger known to man.

Stanley's great effort proved successful and his laconic greeting to the great missionary, "Mr. Livingstone, I presume," became a classic of the day. His achievement added immeasurably to the fame of the *Herald*.

In later years, Dana of the *Sun* indulged in many sarcastic allusions to these brave, public-spirited and enterprising journalistic enterprises wherein Bennett the younger sought to emulate Bennett the elder, the great cost of which was virtuously but vociferously proclaimed by the *Herald*.

"It is not the first cost that counts. It is the subsequent costs incurred by the Governments who are compelled to put out additional expeditions to hunt up the original explorers, that count."

The *Herald* is now part of the *Tribune*—Greeley's old paper. It would cause these two worthies to gasp in their coffins to know that their great journals were now controlled by one of the so-called "weaker sex," an appalling misnomer when applied to a person so engaging and competent as Helen Rogers Reid.

A picture of New York at the most exotic and tumultuous



The meeting of Livingstone and Stanley in Central Africa.

period in her career, when the mighty force of steam had entered and utterly changed her whole social fabric, is hard to find. The War of 1812 had temporarily halted the advance presaged by the advent of Fulton's steamboat, but the moment peace is declared the movement is once more under full headway. The opening of the Erie Canal adds another strident instrument to the orchestra. Our own accounts of this period are meager and unsatisfactory. Carlyle might have written it or William Hazlitt. Harriett Martineau, Mrs. Trollope, Frederica Bremer, Henry Wamsey, Faaron, Fox and Dickens have all left us with a glimpse of the muddy streets we possessed, the miniature lakes and rivers on Broadway after every downpour, and our filthy habit of tobacco chewing and spitting. But of the life of the people, their gradual conquest of a volcanic ridge of gneiss, into an orderly assemblage of streets and avenues; of the rearing of a modern city—where but a few years before the red man had roamed in a wilderness—there is no hint in the pages of these great writers.

If Philip Hone had only written his diary in the same spirit as did Pepys, we would have had an unforgettable picture of New York in those early days of the Nineteenth Century. But it is so obviously written for posthumous publication, that it has been robbed of all the charm possessed by an intimate, confidential record meant for none but the eyes of the writer.

Mr. Hone was Mayor of New York in 1825, a man of large wealth and the first man to introduce coal into New York in a big way. The little town of Honesdale in the midst of the Pennsylvania coal district is named after him. He was one of the founders of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company and Railroad and of high social position. He entertained lavishly and met everyone apparently worth meeting. It is the latter fact that militates against his diary as an historical record. He is concerned only with the great and the near great; the com-

mon herd interests him not at all. Yet it was the common people who were building New York.

“The Liner she’s a lady, an’ she never looks
nor ’eeds—
The Man-o’-War’s ’er ’usband an’ ’e gives
’er all she needs;
But, oh, the little cargo-boats that sail the
wet seas roun’,
They’re just the same as you an’ me,
a-plyin’ up an’ down.”

Yet although he gives you the impression of strutting up and down his pages incessantly yelling, “Look at me!” he has nevertheless recorded much of great value concerning the period in which he lived. Sometimes he recorded old hearsays. For example, he wrote that Franklin rigged up a little shop of his own in the belfry of Rip Van Dam’s old Dutch church in Nassau Street, where most of his important problems in electricity were solved; and that Talleyrand said the most democratic sight he saw, and the one which impressed him the most favorably, was Alexander Hamilton staggering to court with a load of law books under his arm. Nor were either of these men contemporaries of Hone’s.

Franklin makes no mention of his shop in New York either in his autobiography or in his letters to Collingwood, which Mr. Hone claimed to have read “many years ago.” As for Hamilton, he might have tried to look and act like Washington, but he would never under any circumstances try to play the part of a common porter, even to spread the fame of the new Republic to the uttermost ends of the earth.

Nevertheless, we are deeply indebted to Mr. Hone for the few genuine passages in his diary. If we mourn, it is because Mr. Hone lost a golden opportunity. He could easily have made his Diary priceless and rendered a valuable service to the city he loved—which no doubt was what he had in mind.

Nor, in all his sonorous sentences, in all his multitudinous pages is there a word of suppressed affection, of hidden emotion for his self-imposed labor of love. The last entry is as cold as the first.

Pepys thought he was going blind. His farewell to his Diary is one of the most touching things in all literature. But the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb, and though Hone failed utterly as a Pepys or an Evelyn, an ordinary everyday business man has left us an unforgettable picture of dramatic intensity which provides us with an amazing view of New York at this period. Mr. William Earl Dodge made no literary pretensions. He had something of interest to say and he said it. Had his paper been read anywhere but before a Historical Society, it would have found its way into general circulation long ago, to the great delight of writers, students and lovers of Old New York. Mr. Dodge was a founder of the great firm of Phelps, Dodge & Co., and one of the most eminent merchants of his day. We give you his paper of his recollections, and if you read nothing else in this book, you will have had your money's worth.

. . . Eighteen hundred and eighteen found me a boy in a wholesale drygoods store, No. 304 Pearl Street, near Peck Slip.

It was a very different thing, in those days, to be a boy in a store from what it is now. I fear that many young men, anxious to get started, would hesitate long before facing such duties as had then to be performed. My father lived at that time at 98 William Street, now the corner of Platt. William Street was then the fashionable retail drygoods center; at No. 90 stood Peter Morton's large store, the fashionable family store of that day.

I had to go every morning to Vandewater Street for the keys, as my employers must have them in case of fire in the night. There was much ambition among the young men as to who should have his store opened first, and I used to be up soon after light, walk to Vandewater Street and then to the store very early. It was to be sprinkled with water, which I brought the evening before from the old pump at the corner of Peck Slip and Pearl

Street, then carefully swept and dusted. Then came sprinkling the sidewalk and street, and sweeping to the center a heap for the dirtcart to remove. This done, one of the older clerks would come, and I would be permitted to go home for breakfast. In winter the wood was to be carried and piled in the cellar, fires were to be made, and lamps trimmed. I mention these particulars to show that junior clerks in those days did the work now done by the porters. There were comparatively very few carts used by the drygoods dealers, most of the business being done by porters, with hand-carts and large wheelbarrows, who stood at the different corners ready to take or go for a load. Each had a heavy leather strap over the shoulders and a brass plate on the breast with his license number. Their charges for any distance below or above Chambers Street were $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents and $18\frac{3}{4}$ cents respectively. There were very few carts, and those of the old-fashioned two-wheel kind; such heavy two horse trucks and large express and other wagons as now fill our business portions of the city were unknown in those days.

The drygoods auction-stores were mostly on the corners, and on the blocks from Wall to Pine Streets. When our employer would purchase a lot of goods at auction, it was our business to go and compare them with the bill, and if two of us could carry them home we did so, as it would save the shilling portorage. I remember that while in this store I carried bundles of goods up Broadway to Greenwich Village, near what are now Seventh and Eighth Avenues and Fourth to Tenth Streets, crossing the old Stone Bridge at Canal Street. This had long square timbers on either side in place of railing, to prevent a fall into the sluggish stream—some fifteen feet below—which came from Collect Pond where Centre Street and the Tombs now are, and was the great skating place in winter. Turning in at the left of the bridge I took a path through Lispenard's meadows, often crossing on two timbers laid over the ditches where the tide ebbed and flowed from the East River. At that time there was no system of sewerage, but the water fell was carried off by the gutters and by surface draining.

I remember well the old Fly Market, which commenced at Pearl Street where Maiden Lane crosses. There was a very large arched drain, over which the market was built, extending from Pearl Street to the dock. It was so high that, in passing along Pearl on the south sidewalk, one had to ascend quite an elevation to get over the arch of the sewer. Maiden Lane then was as nar-

row at Pearl Street as Liberty is between William and its present junction with Maiden Lane—only about fifteen feet wide. In the winter, when the streets were running with the wash of melting snow and ice, the mouth of the sewer at Pearl Street would often clog up, and then the water would set back as far as Gold Street; the sidewalk being constructed some two feet above the roadway, to provide for the great flow of water that came down from Broadway, Nassau, William and Liberty Streets. The boys used to get old boots, and, placing them on a pole, would make in the slush of snow and ice footprints all across Pearl Street, as if persons had been passing, and then would run around the corners to see some poor stranger step into the trap and sink above his knees in water.

They tell a story of a young lady who was coming down Pearl Street, just as a heavy rain had filled the street back to Gold, and of a polite young sailor who saw her stand wondering how she could get over. He took her at once without asking, and, himself wading across, knee-deep, placed her on the other side all safe. She at once demanded what the impudent fellow meant, when he replied, "Hope no harm has been done!" and, catching her up again, placed her back on the other side.

At this time the wholesale drygoods trade was confined almost entirely to Pearl Street, from Coenties to Peck Slips, though there were a few firms further up, and any party intending to commence that business must first be sure that he could obtain a store in Pearl Street. We now talk of what Wall Street is doing; then, if one would speak of drygoods trade, he would say "things are active" (or "dull") "in Pearl Street."

The retail trade was mostly in William Street and Maiden Lane, except three fashionable houses that were the Stewarts of that day. These were all in Broadway; Vandevoot, near Liberty Street; "the Heights," near Dey Street, and Jotham Smith, who occupied the site of the Astor House. Stewart did not commence until 1824. The cheap retail drygoods stores were in upper Pearl and Chatham Streets; the wholesale groceries were in Broad, Water, and Front Streets. At this time the trade was mostly divided by sections, some selling almost entirely to the South, others to the North and West, and others doing what was called an Eastern and Long Island trade. The capital and business of one who was then termed a jobber were very different from what are now suggested by that term. A firm with \$15,000 to \$20,000 capital commanded good credit, and its annual sales seldom exceeded a

few hundred thousand. I doubt if there were half a dozen persons who sold over a million each. Now we have many who sell that amount every month, and some of them over a million a week. The styles of goods also have changed very much. Then nearly all drygoods were imported; our calicoes or prints came in square hair-trunks, containing fifty pieces each; very few goods came in boxes—they were either in trunks or bales. We had a few domestic cottons, but they were all woven by hand. Powerlooms were not introduced till a few years after. Our common cottons were all from India, and called India "hun-hums"; they had very strange names, such as "Bafturs," "Gurros," etc. Most of them were thin, sleazy goods, filled with a kind of starch to make them look heavy. At present nearly all cotton goods sold are of American manufacture.

Our cloths and cassimeres were all imported. Large quantities of silks from France and Italy, and beautiful crapes and satins for ladies' wear, were brought from India and China. Business was periodical; we had our spring and fall trade. You will remember there were but few steamboats, and no railroads, and it was quite an event for the country merchants to visit the city. They generally came twice a year—spring and fall; those from the North and East by the Sound or North River, in sloops or schooners, often a week on their passage; those from the South and West by stage-coaches. It is very difficult to realize what it was to come from Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, and Missouri, when the most of the long journey was by stage-riding night and day; and even from our Southern States it was a tedious trip to some point on the coast, where the vessel might make the long journey less trying. There were lines of ships and schooners running between Norfolk, Richmond, Charleston, Savannah, New Orleans, and Mobile, but these trips were often very long and the accommodations poor.

Over the stores in Pearl Street were a large number of boarding-houses expressly for country merchants; here they would remain a week or ten days, picking up a variety of goods, for most of them kept what were then called country-stores. They had to purchase drygoods, groceries, hardware, medicines, crockery, etc., etc. It was a great object with the jobbers to have one of their salesmen board at a large house for country merchants, so that they could induce them to come to their stores to trade. Most of the goods were shipped by sloops, bound up the North River or the Sound; those for the South, on schooners and brigs to ports

from whence they were taken into the interior. There were very few hotels, the principal ones being the City Hotel, which occupied the block in Broadway near Trinity Church; the Pearl Street House, between Old and Coenties Slips, and Bunker's, near the Bowling Green. These periodical seasons were active times, the bulk of the business being done in three months of spring and three months of fall. The winter and summer were comparatively idle. There was a limited district from which to draw customers, and as soon as the North River and the rivers and harbors of the Sound were closed by ice, Pearl Street was almost as quiet as Sunday.

. . . New York was then a comparatively small city, with a population (1820) of less than 120,000, and . . . extended very little above Canal Street. Most of the dwellings were below Chambers, on the North River, but on the East River there were many up as far as Market and Rutgers Streets. The most of the merchants and families of wealth lived in the lower part of the town, in Greenwich below Chambers, and on the cross streets west of Broadway from the Park to the Battery. Many merchants in Pearl Street lived over their stores, and John, Fulton, Beekman, Gold, and Cliff were filled with private residences. I was married fifty years ago in Cliff Street near my present office. Then that good man, Dr. Milnor, preached in St. George's, corner of Beekman and Cliff Streets, to crowded audiences. Stores now occupy the ground, but it is consoling to know that from the proceeds of the sale of that church two others have been erected. The most fashionable residences were, perhaps, around the Battery and up Broadway and Greenwich to Cortlandt. It is interesting and instructive to think of the noble merchants who occupied those dwellings, all of whom have passed away—such men as Robert Lenox, Stephen Whitney, James G. King, J. Phillips Phoenix, James Suydam, Cadwalader D. Colden, James De Peyster, Pierre Irving, Gideon Lee, the Howlands, Aspinwalls, and many others who have honored the name of New York merchants.

The churches were then all downtown—the old "Wall Street," "Garden Street," (now Exchange Place) "Middle" and "North Dutch," "Trinity," and "St. Paul's," "Grace," "Cedar Street," the old "Brick" (where now stands the *Times* Building), "Liberty," which Thorburn so long occupied as a seedstore, and "Murray" and "Rutgers,"—then far up town. I remember when young Philip Melancthon Whelpley was pastor of the Wall Street Church, of which my father was then an elder. He was settled

when only about twenty-one, was a most eloquent man, but suffered from dyspepsia; he lived in Greenwich Street, back of Trinity Church. Some adventurous man had put up four small houses on White Street, then just opened, near Broadway, and as Mr. Whelpley felt the need of exercise, and the rent was very low, he ventured to hire one of these, but the excitement in the congregation at the idea of their pastor living out of the city was so great that it came nigh losing him his place. Speaking of churches, I often have thought there was more or real worship when, in place of our present quartette, there was in most of the dissenting churches a precentor standing under the pulpit, to give the key with his pitch-pipe, and all the congregation united in the singing. The first Presbyterian church built north of Canal Street was the "Broome Street," standing between Elm and Centre. My father-in-law, Mr. Phelps, who was on the committee of Presbytery appointed to select a location, told me that at that time the entire triangle from Broome to Spring was for sale, and he advised the purchase of the whole, as the price was very low and he felt that the building of the church would add to the value, so that the sale of the other lots would pay the cost of the church. But the rest of the committee felt it was so far uptown that there would be no chance of selling.

Fifty years ago I commenced housekeeping in the upper part of the city, in Bleecker Street, between Broadway and the Bowery; there were eight new two-story attic houses just finished, 23 by 40 feet, and three or four of us, young married people, took houses adjoining, and each paid \$300 a year rent, and when newly furnished we thought them very fine. Young business men could afford to marry in those days. I had the curiosity to call a short time since and ask the present occupant what rent he paid. He said the rent had been reduced, and he was now paying but \$1500. I told him I only inquired from curiosity, as, when the house was new, I paid just one-fifth of that.

When the Bible House was to be removed from Nassau Street, the Committee, all but one, decided to go no further up than Grand Street; the present site, at Ninth and Tenth Streets, owned by Mr. Peter Stuyvesant, was then fenced in and rented as a pasture or for vegetables. Mr. Stuyvesant was at that time paying very heavy assessments for opening streets on his property, and, being himself interested in the Bible Society, offered the entire block for \$100,000 cash, which, by one of the committee, the late Anson G. Phelps, was considered a great bargain. Mr. Phelps

could not for a long time induce his associates to agree with him, since they felt it was so far uptown that it would be out of the way; but when informed that he should purchase it himself, if they did not, they yielded, and we can all see the wisdom of the choice. The rents of the portion not required for their work now pay all expenses, salaries, etc., so that every dollar given to the Bible Society goes for furnishing the Bible and for nothing else.

Think of New York without gas! At that time the street lamps were few and far between, often filled with poor oil and badly trimmed. They looked on a dark night like so many lightning bugs, and in winter would often go entirely out before morning. In 1825, the first gas-lights were introduced by the New York Gas Company, which had contracted to light below Canal Street. In 1834, the Manhattan Company obtained the contract to light above Canal Street; we can now hardly conceive how our citizens could get on without gas, and yet it was much safer walking the streets then than now. Crime was not so rife, and a murder was a rare occurrence. The first murder I remember was committed by a tailor of the name of Johnson, living in William Street near Beaver; he killed his wife, and the excitement of his arrest, trial and hanging—which took place out of the city on a vacant lot east of Broadway, now a portion of White Street—lasted for months. We seldom open our morning paper now without the record of a murder in some one of the drinking saloons.

There were no police in those days, but there were a few watchmen, who came on soon after dark and patrolled the streets till near daylight. Their rounds were so arranged that they made one each hour, and as the clocks struck they pounded with their clubs three times on the curb, calling out, for example, "Twelve o'clock, and all is well," in a very peculiar voice. They wore leathern caps such as the firemen now use.

Our streets were kept cleaner than now, since every one was responsible for a space in front of his building extending to the middle of the street. The garbage-men with large carts came around to collect from the tub or half-barrel placed in the area. . . . Then there were a special kind of street-cleaner, in the vast number of pigs, owned by the poorer classes. . . . It was by many claimed that they ate up the garbage thrown into the streets in spite of law, and thus were to be tolerated.

The Sabbaths were for the most part very quiet, and but few vehicles were seen in the city. There were no public cries except those of the milkmen, who were mostly farmers from Long Is-

land, and carried their milk in large tin cans suspended by a yoke from their shoulders. They generally served real milk, but it was sometimes said that they stopped to wash their cans at the corner-pumps. Although the Sabbath was almost free from disturbance by carriages, still, for fear that some one might be passing during worship, the churches had chains drawn across the streets on either side, which were put up as soon as service commenced and taken down at its close. What would our riding, sporting, Sabbath-breaking citizens say to such obstructions if put up on Fifth or Madison avenues now?

The Sabbath-schools were then just introduced into the city, and but two or three at the time to which I refer, and these were designed only for the poor and neglected children. The children of churchgoers were instructed at home in the catechism, and in many churches were expected to recite every Wednesday afternoon in the session-room to the pastor and elders.

Our wonderful system of public schools has all been developed since the time of which I speak.

The Battery was the great point of attraction as a cool and delightful promenade, and in the warm season was crowded every afternoon and evening; the grass was kept clean and green and the walks in perfect order; there was a building near the south end, of octagonal form, called the "Flag-staff," having an observatory in the top, and above it always waved the "national flag." In the summer and early fall a band of music in the evening enlivened the scene, and the grounds were crowded with the elite of the city; it was as polite and marked a compliment for a young lady to be invited by a gentleman to take a walk on the Battery as now to be invited to a drive in the Park; and on Saturdays the boys were allowed to play ball, etc., on the grass. Castle Garden was then a fort with its garrison; and the guard were always to be seen walking their rounds, on the parapet, and before the gate leading from the Battery, across the drawbridge, to the Fort.

The city was so compact that there were very few private carriages. I venture to say that there were not then twenty-five families that kept a two-horse carriage. In fact, there was very little use for one; there were no pleasant drives out of the city; the old Bloomingdale Road was mostly used, but in summer it was very dusty, and there were no attractions. The old Boston Road, where are now the Bowery and Third Avenue, and the Albany road, which is now upper Broadway, were the only roads for pleasure travel, and were used by gentlemen who lived in the

summer at their country houses. These were along the East River, from what is now Eighth Street up to a point opposite Hell Gate, on the North River, and along what were then Bloomingdale and Greenwich, say from what is now Fourth Street up to Eightieth Street.

The contrasts between the City Postoffice of my early days and the splendid building of today, and the amount of business then and now, give a vivid idea of the progress of the city and country. The office then was in the dwelling of the Postmaster, General Theodorus Bailey, who, having been appointed in 1804, converted his lower floor into the Postoffice, living above with his family. It was situated at the corner of William and Garden Streets, now Exchange Place; the two parlors were converted into the office; on Garden Street there was a window for city delivery and in William Street a vestibule of about 8 by 16 feet with 144 small boxes for letters. Not over half a dozen clerks were employed. This was still its position when I went into a store, and I well remember the fun we boys had while waiting for the office to open, which was not until about eight or nine o'clock A.M. We used to employ the time by crowding up the line, so that the lucky boy who first had got opposite the one small place of delivery could be pushed aside to make room for some other, who would soon have in turn to give way. Postage then was so high that the number of letters sent by mail was comparatively small: 12½ cents to Philadelphia, 18¾ cents to Boston and 25 cents to New Orleans. It was the habit to send as far as possible by private hands, and when it became known that a friend was going by stage or sloop he was sure to be the carrier of many letters—the exchanges between the interior and the banks being mostly effected in the same way.

When Abraham Wakeman, in 1862, was Postmaster, there was living, at an advanced age, a man by the name of Dodd; this person, when General Bailey was Postmaster, made a contract with him to take the mails from the New York office to the Western and Southern stages that started and arrived at Hoboken and Jersey City. He stated that for three years he carried the mailbags on his back and ferried them in his own little boat across the river; but they then grew heavy, and for some years afterward he took them in a small wheelbarrow to his boat.

In nothing, perhaps, has there been a more beneficial change than in the items of water. This formerly was supplied by public pumps at the corners of blocks far apart; the water was brackish

and very hard and poor; there were some few springs in the upper part of the city, where wells had been sunk and pumps erected by individuals. This water was taken about the city in large casks, similar to those now used for sprinkling the streets, and painted in large letters on the end "Tea Water." It was sold at two cents a pail. Besides this, the Manhattan Company was chartered with banking privileges to supply the city with water by boring and pumping into tanks, from the ground near the upper end of Pearl Street in Centre Street. Thence wooden pipes were laid to many dwellings, but the water proved poor and in limited supply, and the company found the banking department better than the water, so that the logs soon decayed and were never renewed. For washing and all ordinary purposes, the main dependence was upon the cisterns supplied from the rain caught on the roofs, but in long droughts these would entirely fail, and then the street pumps were the only source of supply, and those could not be used with any comfort for the family washing.

I shall never forget one time, when there had been no rain for weeks, and our cistern (we were living near the Battery) was dry, as well as those of all our neighbors. My mother, visiting a friend quite uptown, near Fulton Street, was complaining that she had not a drop of soft water to wash fine muslins, and her friend offered to let her fill a demijohn from her cistern. My brother and myself made our mother very happy by bringing her the coveted vessel of water that evening. Well might our citizens hasten to the ballot-box, in 1835, to vote "Water" or "No Water" on the question of introducing the Croton; and now in its profuse enjoyment but few remember the old times when they were glad to get a pail of water for their tea at a cost of two cents. But I have sometimes almost sighed for the old brackish pumps which were used by the passing laborer to quench his thirst, and I remember that for years after their removal there was not a drop of water to be had by any thirsty man unless he went into a corner grocery.

Wood was then almost the only fuel, though Liverpool coal was used in offices and parlors. Those who could afford it purchased their sloop-load of hickory and oak in the fall, and had it sawed and piled in the cellar for the winter. Hundreds of sloops from North River towns, and from Connecticut and Long Island, filled the slips on the North and East Rivers, and at many of the street corners carmen stood with loads for sale.

It was about this time that the anthracite fields of the Lehigh

were discovered, and I shall not forget the time when my employers sent up a barrel of hard coal for trial. We made up a fire in the ordinary open grate, with kindlings, and it did not blaze; we poked it, but the more we poked the more it would not burn, until the Quaker's patience was exhausted and he condemned the stone-coal as well named but quite unfit for use.

There were no such things as stoves or furnaces for warming a house. It makes one almost shiver now to remember the cold halls and bedrooms of those days, or the attempt to warm a large store in a cold winter by a coal or wood fire, at the extreme end, which left the front as cold as a barn. How my feet and fingers have ached as I have stood at the desk of a bitter morning!

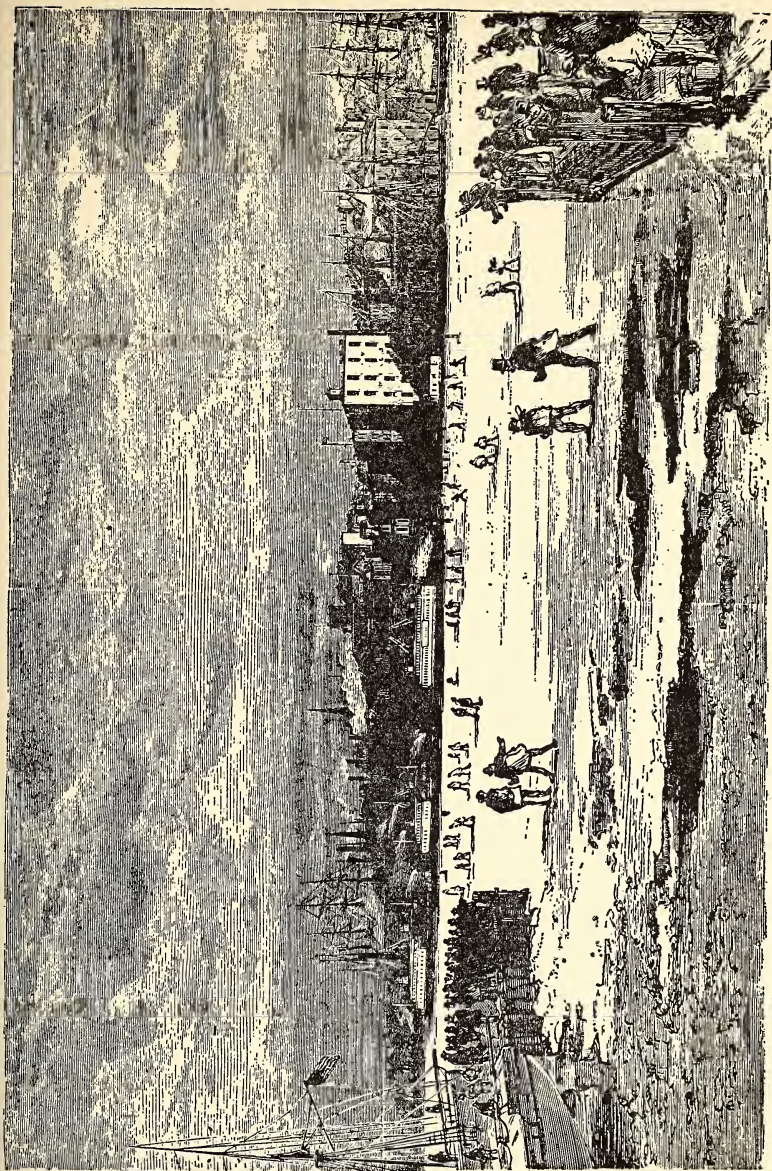
Brooklyn then was an inconsiderable village, containing in 1823 but 7,000 inhabitants, and in 1835 but 24,310. The small rowboats, which till 1811 had been the only ferry across the river, were interfered with by the introduction of the first ferryboats, but until 1822 the latter consisted of one small steamer and one horse-boat. It was not till 1824 that steam ferryboats of any considerable size were introduced, and the accommodations for Brooklyn continued on a small and inconvenient scale till 1836, when public meetings were held, demanding greater facilities, and from that time large and better boats were used in the transit. There was only one ferry across the East River, but at the foot of Wall Street, Coenties Slip and Whitehall, there were numbers of small rowboats, bearing a variety of fancy names and handsomely painted, and, when a person wanted to go over, a crowd of oarsmen would gather, each offering him the best boat. The fare across was ten cents. The Jersey City ferriage before 1812 was provided simply by rowboats, and by scows which floated horses and carriages across in pleasant weather. In 1812 and 1813, Fulton constructed for the associate ferries two boats propelled by steam, the beginning of those extensive accommodations by which many thousands now cross in a day. The first boat with steam was put on the Hoboken Ferry in 1812; it was so small that often in a strong tide it had to stop in the river to get up steam enough to make the transit.

The monopoly granted to Fulton and Livingston was set aside about 1820 by the Supreme Court, and the use of steam was thrown open to public competition. Then commenced a new era: boats were soon started on the Sound, the first of these being the "Fulton," Captain Bunker, and the "Connecticut," Captain Comstock. I remember a trip to New London which I made soon after

they were started. The two formed a daily line; the "Fulton" left New York early in the morning, arriving in New Haven about 4 o'clock; then all the passengers and freight were put aboard the "Connecticut" for New London, "Fulton" returning in the evening to New York. This gave time for the boilers to cool off and the machinery to rest, as it was not thought safe to run one boat so far as New London without stopping.

Let me here revert again to the very limited facilities for travel and trade which existed previous to 1825. The sloops and steamers on our lakes, rivers and Sound, the small brigs and ships which ran to our Southern ports, with the stagecoach to all parts of the interior, were the extent of the facilities, and in the winter we were almost entirely shut in. Think of one stage a day, which started from No. 1 Cortlandt Street for Albany, and one for Boston! Who that ever made that trip in winter-time will forget the old agent, Thomas Whitfield, at No. 1 Cortlandt Street? He would book you three days in advance for a seat, and if perchance there were applications for more than the coach would hold, and yet not enough to warrant an extra, one must wait another day for a seat. Then what a time in packing on the baggage and seating the passengers! Why, it was as exciting as the sailing of a steamer with its one hundred and fifty cabin passengers and its crowd for the steerage.

It was a great undertaking in those days to come from the West to the city at any season, particularly in the winter, and many country merchants came but once a year. Those from the line of the Ohio River took stage at Wheeling, and came over the mountains to Baltimore, thence to the city by schooners or stage. The only wonder is that country merchants came as often and as far as they did, and that their goods could be transported by teams over so long distances and pay a profit above expenses. Passengers for Philadelphia, in winter, would cross to Jersey City the evening before, sleep at a tavern, and start in the morning by stage, reaching the Quaker City in a day and a night. At a later period they went by steamer to Amboy, and thence by stage. Who, that now witnesses the thousands daily crossing Cortlandt Street Ferry to take the cars, can realize that sixty years ago two stages would carry all the passengers that went to Newark or vicinity. The emigrant who went West to settle had to go by wagon. I vividly recall the occasion when two of my uncles came with their families from Connecticut, on their way to the far West, stopping at my father's house. It was arranged that, as they might



Crossing the East River on the ice bridge.

never see each other again, the relatives, with several ministers, should spend the afternoon previous to their starting as a season of special prayer. The travelers left the next day by sloop for Albany, whence teams were to take them to their far Western home, which was at Bloomfield, just beyond Utica! Why, last fall I took my tea at my house and my breakfast next morning beyond that distant point.

The opening of the Erie Canal gave a new impulse to travel. The first railroad of the State was from Albany to Schenectady, with an inclined plane at either end; this was built in order that passengers might sooner reach the canal, as from Albany to Schenectady the distance was much greater, and there were numerous locks. It was really pleasant to travel by canal, as from Schenectady to Utica there was hardly a lock (after passing Seneca Falls), and there were but few more on the long reach from Utica to Syracuse. There were rival lines of packet boats, some very handsomely fitted up; their four horses were matched teams of either black, bay, or gray, and the best that could be found; the captains and owners took great pride in their teams, which were beautifully harnessed, and kept up a speed of four to five miles an hour. There was no motion felt, and when in the cabin it was hard to tell if the boat was under way. In pleasant weather most of the passengers sat on the trunks on deck, and had a fine view of the country. Some caution was required, however. When one happened to be standing, and the driver gave a snap of his whip the horses would give a sudden start, which might throw a passenger off. Again, as the bridges, which on almost every farm crossed the canal, were then very low, one must stoop as he passed or be knocked overboard, and the continued cry of the helmsman was, "Low bridge! Heads down!" which kept one on the lookout. The fare was so much a mile "and found," and the boats provided a very comfortable table. At night berths were made up on either side, each just wide enough to hold an ordinary person; they were three high, and supported by cords from the ceiling. Lots being drawn for the numbers, it often created much merriment to see a very large man trying to get into an upper berth, while the holder of the number for the under one looked on with fear lest the cords might break and let his companion down. The ladies' cabin was in the front of the boat, separated by long curtains, which were thrown open in the daytime.

I now propose to refer to a period somewhat later and to me

more interesting. In May, 1827, I commenced at 213 Pearl Street the wholesale drygoods business. Here I will venture to relate an incident, as I think it may be of service to some of my young friends who are looking forward to mercantile life. A few weeks after we started, and when our stock of goods was small, three young men stepped into the store, each having two large tin trunks which he carried in his hands, aided by a large strap over the shoulders. I saw at once they were Connecticut peddlers, for I had often dealt with such when a clerk. They were attracted by some article in the window. After giving them its price, and while they set down their loads to rest and talk, I said pleasantly, "I see you are, like myself, just starting in business. Now, let me make you a proposition: there is plenty of room in our store; each of you take one of these pigeon-holes under the shelves, put your trunks there in place of carrying them around while you are picking up your goods, and just order all you buy to be sent here. We will take charge of your purchases, pack and ship them, and you can come here and examine your bills, write letters, and do as you like, whether you buy a dollar of us or not. I want to make at least a show of doing business, and it will really be an advantage to us as well as a convenience to you." They were pleased with the offer, accepted it at once, and left in search of such things as they wanted. My young partner waited till they got out, and then, with considerable excitement and wounded pride, said, "Well, are those what you call customers?" I said, "Yes, you know that tall oaks from little acorns grow. We shall see by and by what they will make." Suffice it to say, that for the six years I remained in the drygoods business, they were among my most attached customers.

The time came when new channels of communication with the great West began to be discussed and many enterprises were started. The West had been tapped by the Erie Canal; the lakes were thus united to the Atlantic and began to pour their treasures into New York, and business of all kinds rapidly increased. As the canal-boats came in at the foot of Broad Street and Coenties Slip, and most of the goods for the West were shipped by them, the merchants began to move from upper Pearl Street, and below Wall Street the rents advanced, and from thence to Coenties Slip the largest Western trade was conducted. About this time the lines of tow-boats were established between Albany and New York.

In nothing is the change more marked than between the cur-

rency used during my early business life and that now in circulation. General Jackson had put his foot on the United States Bank, and we had nothing but banks chartered by the different States. Many of these were owned and controlled by individuals, the system being different in almost every State. Some had careful restrictions, others hardly any. Banks were chartered with capitals as small as \$50,000, with no limit to their issues; and their great object was to get a location so far from convenient access that their circulation would not easily find its way back. Most of the country banks of respectability had agencies where they redeemed their bills at rates varying, according to location, from one-eighth to three-quarters or one per cent; but the banks in other distant States had no regular place of redemption, and their issues were purchased by brokers at all rates, from three-quarters to five per cent. The notes of many of the banks far South and West were sold at five to ten per cent discount, and firms doing a large business had to keep one or more clerks busy in turning uncurrent bills into funds that could be here deposited. After the great depression that followed the financial troubles of 1837, many firms doing business South and West were compelled to settle with their customers by taking, as money, the currency that was passing in those sections, issued by banks which had suspended specie payment and yet kept up a large circulation, which could only be converted at a very heavy discount into money current in New York. A person starting from New Orleans for New York would have to change his currency several times in order to get funds that would be taken for fares or hotel bills. The country was flooded with all kinds of bankbills, good, bad, and indifferent, and they became a perfect nuisance. Now we have the best paper currency the country ever had; we never think of looking at bank-bills, for, as to the National banks, we know they are all secured by United States bonds. No matter if a bank fails, its notes are as good as gold. . . .

In December, 1835, the great fire occurred. . . . Before the close of 1836 nearly all was rebuilt, and the streets looked better than before the fire. However, from that date the drygoods business left Pearl Street, was driven out of the burnt district never to return, and since has been gradually working uptown, and now has no one street to mark its locality.

Strange as it may seem, 1836 was a year of vast trade and expansion. All kinds of new projects for securing hasty fortunes were introduced, and before the capital of the city had recovered

from the losses of the fire, its credit was extended and speculation ran wild; everything was advancing, and the people were intoxicated with their many schemes, but in 1837 the bubble burst and the widespread ruin followed which has made that year one of the long-to-remember epochs of New York.

In the spring of 1837 an event happened which was to inaugurate an entire change in the mode of ocean communication. The little steamer "Sirius" suddenly made its appearance in our harbor from Liverpool, the first which had ever crossed the Atlantic, and thousands of our citizens crowded to see her; she was soon followed by the "Great Western," Captain Mathews, which became so popular and successful. Many still doubted if steamships could be made safe or run profitably, but the most daily arrival and sailing of the splendid steamers of this day, from and to all the ports of Europe, and the voyages along our entire coast, have long since settled the question. In my early business life, it was a very uncommon thing for persons to cross the ocean, except for business, and it was still less common for those from the other side to visit us. There are more crossing now in a week than then sailed in a year.

There are two items in Mr. Dodge's paper of particular interest; his reference to licensed porters who appear to have been the principal means of transporting goods around the city. Apparently horse-drawn vehicles were practically nonexistent; distances were short, most of the business houses lying south of Chambers Street scattered between the two rivers and the area small.

Licensed porters still exist in the old Billingsgate Fish Market in London, a custom that has existed for over two hundred years. This system seems to have been the one adopted by the porters of New York.

The second is the vast amount of business conducted by the auctioning of goods taken from the ships and piled on the docks. The start of Philip Hone's fortune was made in this business which was an important one at this period.

We have here an excellent cameo of the city at a most fascinating period. The disastrous interruption to business

caused by the War of 1812 had been overcome. The city was now fairly launched on its amazing career, and Mr. Dodge's engaging description of its growth from 1818 almost to the Centennial is a most important contribution to the annals of our ancient city.

CHAPTER V

New York Sprouts Violence

ANOTHER very excellent book of perhaps a slightly earlier period is that of Mrs. Grant, author of *An American Lady*, which describes in an engaging manner her life in Albany with her Aunt Schuyler.

It is not generally known that most of our real old New York families originally came from these old estates along the Hudson, stretching from Albany south to Kingston on the west shore and to Hyde Park on the east; with Rhinebeck as the capital of this ancient oligarchy. If Margaret Beekman had only left her Memoirs!

During and directly after the Revolution this section ruled New York politically and socially, and within its borders dwelt such powerful families as the Schuylers, Beekmans, Roosevelts, Hamiltons, Livingstons, Clintons, Cuylers, Delafields, Astors, Huntingtons, Chandlers, Miller Mills, Dows, Fish, Huntington Armstrongs, Dinsmores, Osbornes and others. They are an integral part of old New York and belong in any story of the ancient city.

Rhinebeck is the only northern town I know of that still owns its own Telephone Company, and whose stock is still held by the original subscribers of fifty years ago. The Bell people have an arrangement whereby they look after the physical upkeep of the plant, restoring fallen poles, broken lines after storms, etc. etc., in return for the privilege of the right of way through this section of the Hudson River. Rather

a neat arrangement for a simple group of weary plowmen to put over on a powerful corporation, *n'est ce pas?*

Once upon a time an efficiency expert from the Western Union walked into their Rhinebeck office. Everything was wrong—everything too slipshod. Messages still being delivered via bicycles instead of by telephone. Outrageous!

Messengers always collected a good tip from these old families and this prerogative ranked in the bucolic mind with the Magna Charta or the fishermen's rights along the shores of Newport. But the new efficiency expert knew nothing of this. Messages would be relayed by telephone; so Mrs. Astor, Mrs. Tracy Dows and a host of others were soon being called up at all hours to receive telegrams.

Where this efficiency expert missed out, was in not knowing that Western Union was largely owned by Rhinebeckers and that a letter to the Executive Office suggesting the recall of the efficiency manager would result in immediate action. He learned this later on. Queer old town, Rhinebeck, and it has a wonderful weekly newspaper. Go up there next Fall for their Annual Dutchess County Fair. It's great!

Mrs. Grant's book is essential to anyone desiring to know the origin and ramifications of our original forbears. Her book would be priceless were it free from the same fault that mars Hone's diary. It gives little or no details of the life of the lower classes, but concerns itself exclusively with the *haut ton*.

Mrs. Grant's memoirs cover a most interesting period of life in old Albany and bring vividly to mind that ancient oligarchy that for so many years ruled the State and the City with an iron hand.

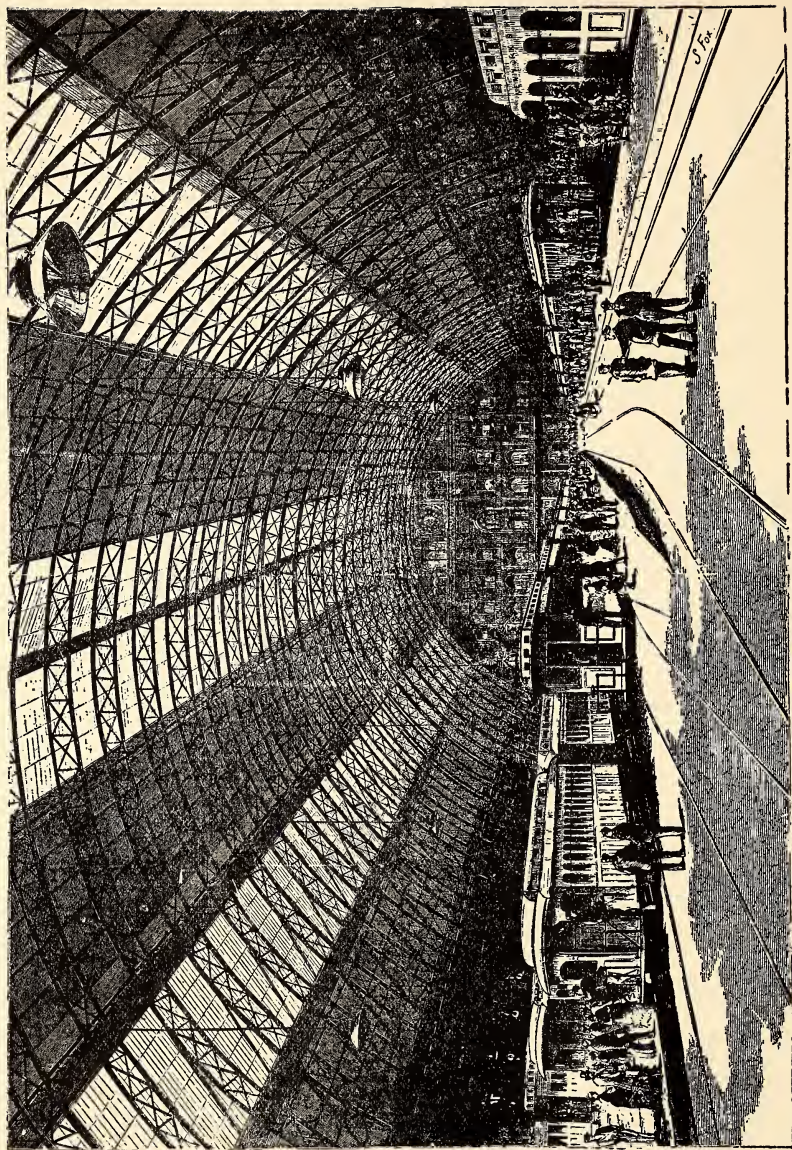
Meanwhile, vast economic changes were developing in the city as the direct result of the Steam Age which by the introduction of this mighty force was fast creating a new civilization. The River boats had increased mightily in size and speed, though somewhat retarded up to this time by the Ful-

ton-Livingston monopoly. On behalf of downtrodden humanity, a big-hearted ferryman from Staten Island undertook unselfishly the struggle for the "Freedom of the Seas." The details of this contest are well known to most of my readers and will not be repeated here. The case is legally known as Gibbons against Fulton *et al.* Gibbons was a captain employed by Vanderbilt to operate the opposition ferry, which the latter had started between New York and Jersey City for the purpose of testing the Fulton patent; and Daniel Webster had charge of the legal end. The result was a victory for the Commodore and marked his entrance into the field of water transportation equipped with something more substantial than sail and oars.

The tendency of the boiler to blow up was an ever-present danger. At one time this difficulty was met by building luxurious barges which were towed by the steamboat. But this caused delay, and speed was the great *desideratum*. The introduction of the governor and a peculiar construction known as the hog frame enabled the steamers to dispense with the barges formerly towed, and the real development of the steamboat began. No matter how large or how heavy the boiler was built, it was easily supported by the hog frame, and the danger of "breaking the back" of the boat by reason of this enormous weight in the middle, was obviated.

These Hudson River boats deserved their great reputation. They developed into a scale of magnificence which was the wonder of all. The cabins were furnished on a scale that was luxurious for those days, and the pleasure and comfort of travel by boat was everywhere conceded.

As yet there was no effort made to utilize this new driver power in any field save transportation by water. The vast railroads, factories and mills that were soon to appear were as yet shrouded in the future. That the function of the new power was to revolutionize life itself, was not even suspected. That it was designed to lift the crushing load of labor from



Interior of Grand Central Depot, 1872.

the backs of mankind, had not yet been even surmised. That it would change the entire face of the world, was not even thought of.

The idea of spreading the use of this new giant to new tasks was, however, forming in many minds. Peter Cooper built a locomotive designed to run on rails, called "Tom Thumb." It was used by a railroad running out from Baltimore. At its first test it had hard work to keep up with the horse selected for its test. The horse pranced a trifle faster—but he was rather badly spent from his exertions, while the mechanical horse showed no signs of fatigue whatever. A little stone yard in Quincy, Mass., began using a small engine to haul heavy stones around its yard. The Mohawk and Schenectady stage line put down a line of rails, ran a locomotive and several coaches on it from Albany to Schenectady. This was the "De Witt Clinton," a replica of which has been frequently exhibited by the New York Central, as this little line is the acorn from which grew the present gigantic transcontinental service by rail out of New York.

From Albany the railroad gradually crept down the River to Poughkeepsie where it rested for a while. Then it pushed on again, eventually reaching New York. Under the skillful guidance of Commodore Vanderbilt, this little railroad began to grow, and united or bought up connecting road beds and finally connected New York with Buffalo and the West.

With the Erie Canal, the steamboats and the railroad, New York began to exhibit prodigious growth, and the seed was sown that was to make of New York the Empire City of the State.

While the railroad was thus coming into life, a companion invention was also struggling for recognition—the Morse telegraph. After repeated disappointments, Congress finally appropriated enough money to build a telegraph line between Washington and Baltimore. It proved a success. And another

great link in the chain of New York's progress was completed.

In the great hall of Cooper Union, which is a trifle lower than the usual ground floor, nearly every famous orator in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century was heard. Many moral questions interested the public in those days. John B. Gough had a lurid lecture on Temperance which drew great crowds. Henry Ward Beecher, easily the finest orator this country has ever produced, was a red hot abolitionist, as were also William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips.

In Brooklyn, during a great meeting concerning the Slavery question, Beecher gave, on his platform, a dramatic representation of the sale of a young slave girl.

"About two weeks ago," he began, "I had a letter from Washington, informing me that a young woman had been sold by her own father to be sent South. She was bought by a Federal slave-dealer for \$1,200, and he has offered to give you the opportunity to purchase her freedom. She has given her word of honor to return to Richmond if the money be not raised, and, slave though she may be called, she is a woman who will keep her word. Now, Sarah, come up here, so that we can see you."

The girl came slowly up the pulpit stairs and stood by Mr. Beecher's side. The great pastor of Plymouth Church became at once in voice and action, a slave auctioneer.

"Look at this magnificent merchandise," he cried, "human flesh and blood like yourselves. You see the white blood of her father in her regular features and high, thoughtful brow. Who bids? You will have to pay extra for that white blood, because it is supposed to give intelligence. Stand up, Sarah! Now look at her trim figure and wavy hair! How much do you bid for them? How much? She is sound in wind and limb, I'll warrant her! Who bids? Her feet and hands—hold them out, Sarah—are small and finely formed. What do you bid for her? She is a Christian woman,—I mean a praying nigger,—

and that makes her more valuable, because it insures her docility and obedience to your wishes. 'Servants, obey your masters,' you know. Well, she believes that doctrine. How much for her? Will you allow this praying woman to be sent back to Richmond to meet the fate for which her father sold her? If not, who bids?"

A great wave of emotion spread through the church and wild scenes were enacted. Women tore jewelry from neck and fingers, throwing it on the platform. Money was thrown from all directions. It was a moving scene.

As the day dawned on which a new President was to be chosen, excitement in New York was at fever heat. It was the golden age of the lecturer, and all the popular speakers of the day were to be heard on the Lyceum. Cooper Institute led them all. A roster of all the great men who have appeared in this modest hall would include every man of any eminence in politics, religion, art, letters or science.

The radio has killed the old Lyceum group. But the record of old Cooper Institute's Forum is one of the glories of our city. This appearance of Lincoln's was the first intuition New York had received that the slavery question was assuming formidable proportions, and events in that direction moved rapidly.

New York's huge trade with the South made it less hysterical than New England on the Slavery question. It put forward as its candidate for the Presidency at this crucial time, William H. Seward, who lived on the fashionable section of Second Avenue and St. Mark's Place. He was safe and sane. The merchants of New York felt that in him they had a wise counselor of proven ability.

Dred Scott, a slave who had escaped from the South, where slave-holding was legal, to a Northern State where it was not, had been returned to his former owner.

The scene opens in the wigwam at Chicago—a huge barn-like structure standing on Lake and Market Streets near the

fork of the Chicago River. It was designed for huge gatherings of a temporary character, and on this occasion housed the delegates forming the first convention of a political party destined to loom large in the history of American life during the next half century.

A great cannon had been mounted on the roof of this building to be fired upon the nomination of a candidate. Another great cannon had been dragged to the entrance gates of the summer home of Senator William H. Seward of New York whose supporters were so confident of victory that they meant to lose no time in announcing to the neighbors the victory of their favorite son in his little home town of Auburn.

Intense excitement marked every moment of the session. When the platform was read, the words "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness" were omitted. Joshua R. Giddings, a prominent delegate, rose in his place and threatened to withdraw from the Convention unless this clause was restored. George William Curtis managed to have it reinstated. Mr. Giddings was thereupon appeased and consented to remain. A catastrophe was averted.

Four hundred and sixty-five delegates had a vote. Two hundred and thirty-three votes were necessary to a choice. Some "straw votes" taken on the train running into the Convention a few days before had shown William H. Seward an overwhelming favorite. In one instance, he had 368 against a total of 93 for all the others. In this ballot, the name of A. Lincoln did not even appear.

The chairman finally rapped for order, and amid a silence that was almost painful, so tense was the feeling, ordered the first ballot. The result showed Seward 173½, and Lincoln 102, Cameron 50½. On the second ballot, Seward rose to 184½, but Lincoln absorbed most of the Cameron vote, reaching 181. This was expected by the Seward men; but in the next ballot their candidate received not only the Cameron

vote, but most of the scattering that had made the Lincoln figures rather impressive.

A slight delay occurred here and the excitement increased. Something had happened. Order was finally restored and the balloting resumed. All over the house, men and women feverishly followed the announcement of each State, checking the various changes. A terrific wave of emotion swept over the hall as the figures showed Lincoln gaining rapidly on Seward.

The chairman rapped for order and announced the result of the third ballot:

Seward	184½
Lincoln	231½

Lincoln lacked but 11½ votes, which were promptly supplied. Before the chair could announce the vote, Delegate Carter of Ohio rose to say that, "Ohio changes 5 votes from Chase to Lincoln." A stampede was on. When all the changes were recorded, the vote stood

Seward	80
Lincoln	364

With tears streaming down his face, William M. Evarts of New York moved to make the nomination unanimous.

The cannon on the roof boomed forth. The cannon in front of the lawn at Auburn was silent and dejectedly dismantled.

The news of Lincoln's election reached Douglas when that defeated candidate was lying in a berth in a sleeping car with a bottle of whiskey alongside. "Abe Lincoln, President of the United States! My God!" he cried when he finally controlled the fit of laughter which seized him. "Abe Lincoln President—Good God!"

It was not, therefore, without grave concern that our merchants saw our stupid politicians handle the Slavery question in such a crass manner as to create a situation fraught with

dire possibilities to the entire country. No one, however, was prepared for armed conflict, and the firing on Fort Sumter came like the proverbial bolt out of a clear sky. The shooting of Captain Ellsworth of the New York Zouaves in Alexandria, for pulling down a Confederate flag, inflamed New York to a white heat; and when Gen. Dix telegraphed the Marshal at New Orleans, "If any man attempts to haul down the American Flag, shoot him on the spot," you might say that the fight was on.

Sir Walter Scott still remained the most popular author in the South, and his romantic tales have been largely blamed for the almost universal opinion in Dixieland that the shopkeepers of the North were clouts compared with the chivalrous young Lochinvars of the South and that one fiery Southerner was as good as a dozen "Yanks." In which belief the beribboned and crinolined young ladies, who lolled languidly under magnolia trees, did nothing to correct. But on such a fantastic foundation much of the hopes of a speedy conquest of arms by the South was built, only to crash at last.

Meanwhile, poor New York is blamed for everything. During the Revolutionary days it was blamed for being a Tory stronghold, and in the Civil War it was said to be the headquarters for all the Copperheads in the country. Yet it was the first to form a Union League pledged to support and sustain the Government in its fight for the Union—an example which was quickly imitated in all the leading cities in the country. Echoes of this time still survive in the numerous Union League Clubs that adopted this name and are still in existence. And it sent more men in response to Lincoln's call for soldiers than any other city.

The War had its practical side for New York. Credit had been freely extended to the merchants of the South on the strength of their cotton crops. Immense sums were involved; many merchants faced bankruptcy in the event of hostilities, and there were other cogent reasons why the War party was

"MY FRIENDS."

When in July 1863, the City of New York was under the reign of a mob, when stores were closed, workshops shut, cars and stages laid up, alarm bells ringing, dwellings burning, inoffensive women and children seeking prisons for safety, unoffending men hanging and roaring at lamp posts, the horizon lighted up by burning orphan asylums, at such a time when no man felt safe, when every citizen had to guard his home, when peaceful law-abiding citizens had to patrol the streets for mutual protection, when law and order were as it seemed, dead, when arson, plunder, murder, and all the infernal passions of a brutalized mob were holding high carnival, and civilization went draped in mourning, then

HORATIO SEYMOUR.

the candidate of the *McClellan Confederate Peace Democracy* for Governor of New York, requested the men doing these bloody deeds, to meet him in front of the City Hall in New York, and there began his coaxing, blarneying address to them, with the words

"MY FRIENDS."

His whole speech was in keeping with this introduction. Now let us see where "my friends" reside. From the election returns showing the majorities that the "*Governor of my friends*" received in certain localities in the City of New York, it will be seen that "*Horatio*" knew whom he was addressing

Votes in the November Election of 1862.

Mackerellville	-	-	-	-	-	570	53
Five Points, (or Practical Amalgamation District,)	812	58					
Corlears Hook, (Democratic Misegeneration District,)	365	40					
Water Street Dance Houses, (or Free Love Dist.)	360	15					
Thirty-three other Districts "of the same sort,"	10,557	1,520					
	12,664	1,681					

Seymour's majority 10,981, or more than entire majority in the State

These Election Districts figure on our Police Books as containing Two Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty three Grogeries, Two Hundred and Seventy-nine notorious brothels, One Hundred and Seventy places where thieves and ruffians habitually resort, One hundred and Five Policy Shops, with Gambling and Dance Houses to match, and also embraces the haunts of the Murderers, Robbers and Incendiaries, who figured in the "Reign of Terror," in July, 1863.

Sold by the American News Co. 121 Nassau St. N. Y. at 75 cents per hundred.

Specimen of campaign literature during Civil War days, in New York.

not overwhelmingly strong in New York. Yet when the die was cast, it stood solidly behind Lincoln and the Union.

We had an enormous mixed foreign population in those days who did not sufficiently understand the significance of the great struggle in which we were engaged. They did understand, however, that if you had three hundred dollars you could hire another man to fight for you; and if you hadn't, you had no alternative but to go out and stop a bullet yourself unless you were lucky. This was made much of by the soap-box orators of the day who cared nothing for the result of their talk, so long as it kept them in the limelight. None of them were ever found at the front. But they created a great riot in the city, during which many poor black devils lost their lives and some white ones were badly messed up.

Always, in a great maritime port like New York, there is a lawless, disorderly element, glad of an opportunity to make trouble and particularly if they can annoy their ancient and hereditary foe—the Police. And it was against the latter that their fury was first made manifest.

After a few insignificant skirmishes, the mob grew bolder and more sanguinary. The Police were soon unable to cope with the situation and the State troops were called upon for help. The Seventh, one of the city's most famous regiments, fortunately had returned from their hurried defense of Washington and with other local militia were soon on the scene.

The mob was not without leaders, mostly of the fanatic type. A huge powerfully built man was noticed at the head of a crowd surging through Twenty-first Street from the East Side. He was leaping into the air, wildly swinging his arms and shaking his fists and cursing. He was crazy for lust and blood. He was singled out and received a shot in the forehead and fell dead. Another lad boldly advanced ahead of his comrades and stood gritting his teeth and cursing the soldiers, pausing at short intervals only to shout encouragement to the rioters. He literally exhibited demoniac rage. He too, was

picked out, shot, and fell dead in the midst of his imprecations and threats. Some four or five hundred rioters were killed by the military. Victims of the mob numbered eight-

ATTENTION !

By Resolution of a large Meeting of the Merchants and Bankers of New York, held at two o'clock, at the Merchants' Exchange. Merchants are requested to close their Stores, and meet with their Employees on South side of Wall St., for immediate organization.

July 14, 2 P. M.

Call for merchants and clerks to defend their shops during the Draft Riots, 1863.

een, eleven of whom were colored men who were strung up to lamp posts and either shot or strangled to death. About fifty buildings were burned and destroyed, and the property

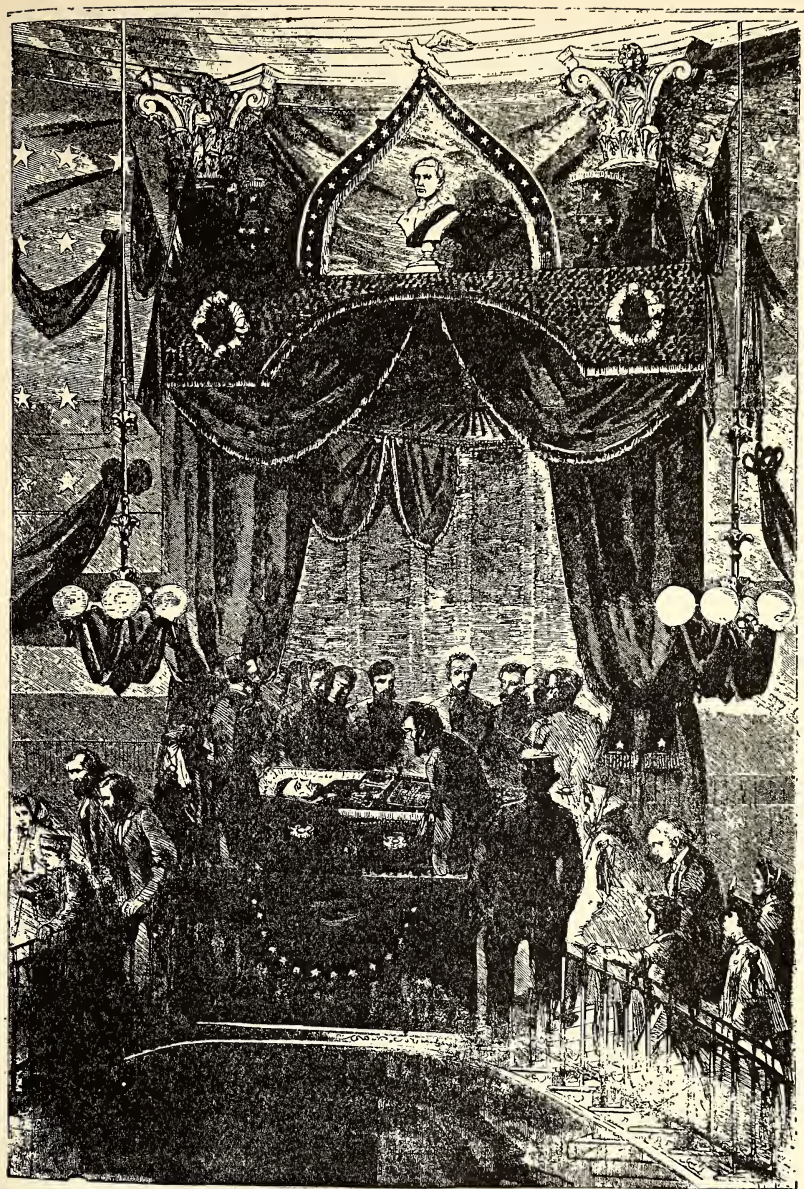
damage from looting and sacking was over a million and a quarter dollars. The rioting commenced on Monday and reached its height by Wednesday. Merchants all over town were organizing their employees into improvised troops to protect the property in their neighborhood. A notice sent out by the section, now known as the financial district, is shown here.

When the seriousness of the situation was at last realized, no time was lost by the authorities in coping with the trouble which at first was not expected to be of any great importance. The moment the troops fired on the rioters with orders to shoot to kill, a change came over these erstwhile braggarts. One whiff of grapeshot altered their attitude very quickly. It was a panicky time, however, and the authorities gave a great sigh of relief when it was over.

The close of the Civil War seemed to work a great change in the city socially, politically and economically. A horde of parvenus, suddenly enriched by war profits, descended upon the town, and for a short period reveled in what became known as the Flash Age.

In its endeavor [writes the author of *Valentine's Manual*] to keep pace with the Second Empire the Flash Age took note only of the superficial and, like all imitators, failed in the matter of good taste, a quality inherent in the French. The march of the Prussian troops through the Arc de Triomphe brought New York's era of extravagance and false prosperity to its close, but it staggered on for two years without a guide, then collapsed with equal suddenness. . . .

"Jim Fisk," in whose rotund person were blended all the elements from which heroes were made in the Flash Age, brought over a company of French singers whom he installed in the Grand Opera House, the *avant-scène* of which he had fitted up with a large green-room designed . . . to re-create on Eighth Avenue the green-room of David Garrick's time. The son of a New England pedlar whose cart, drawn by four fine horses, caused a sensation in every village in which it appeared, James Fisk



Viewing the body of President Lincoln at City Hall, 1865.

Junior early tasted the joys of publicity, and it was in this gorgeously painted vehicle, while watching his father's transactions with village folk as keen as himself, that he acquired the rudiments of the commercial education that eventually won him a lucrative position with the Boston firm of Jordan, Marsh and Company. But either the Hub was too slow for him or he was too fast for the Hub, for he soon gave up his post and entered upon his spectacular career in Wall Street. I recall him as of stout, rather short build with a face of porcine contour from which projected moustaches waxed to a point after the fashion set by the Emperor Louis Napoleon. His wardrobe contained two striking uniforms, one that of the Ninth Regiment, of which he was Colonel, the other that of an admiral, which he assumed in starting the steamboats of the Fall River line. His afternoon progress up Fifth Avenue in an open carriage with one or more women of vivid complexion beside him won for him the respectful salutations of admiring beholders. On one of these trips his companion was Celine de Montaland, a French opera-bouffe singer whom he had engaged for the Grand Opera House. As they drove through Central Park, Fisk told her that they were in the grounds of his New York estate, and the singer, greatly impressed by the grandeur of the property declared that a man of such prodigious wealth could well afford a higher salary than he was paying her and demanded a new contract.

The events leading up to the disaster that lives in the financial annals of the town as "Black Friday" throw a light on Fisk's methods and on the frenzied speculation in gold that was one of the distinguishing marks of the Flash Age. In the hope of creating a panic and gathering up the wreckage, Fisk and Jay Gould bought seven or eight millions of gold, and loaned it out on demand notes, a transaction far in excess of the actual supply outside of the U. S. Treasury. Both men had paid diligent court to President Grant, as credulous then as in later years, and were doing their best to prevent him from throwing the Treasury gold on the market. He seemed to yield and the two speculators bought heavily until Gould became wary and began to unload without telling his partner, whom he urged to keep on buying. Ignorant of his partner's treachery, Fisk continued to buy, offering to bet that he would force the price up to two hundred, and no one would take his bet. . . . A stranger smashed the corner with a sale of five millions. That stranger was Jay Gould, and

the rout of the bulls was completed by the Secretary of the Treasury, who let loose four millions more, which forced the price down to one hundred and thirty-three. Gould showed Fisk how to repudiate his contracts, and the two conspirators, fearing death at the hands of those they had ruined, retreated to the Grand Opera House, barricaded it, and with a force of armed ruffians defied all comers. . . .

With the exception of the Astors, who had been from the first heavy investors in real estate, very few of the wealthy class were acute enough to foresee the enormous growth of the town toward the north. All distinction as a place of fashionable residence had not departed from Bleeker Street, where the present site of the Mills Hotel was occupied by the great house built by one of the Bonaparte princes. The ironwork and doorways still visible on some of the old houses in this and nearby streets tell the tale of old-time fashion. There was not much on Fifth Avenue above 34th Street, where A. T. Stewart had begun work on the huge marble structure that in later years shared the fate of the Jerome mansion on Madison Square by sheltering the Manhattan Club. . . . Central Park Garden . . . one of the most delightful places of entertainment that the city has ever known, musical concerts were given. Never before or since, so far as my knowledge goes, has better music been given in association with superior beer at five cents a glass, than that directed by Theodore Thomas in his cool and airy resort. At the same time, Tony Pastor at his theater on the Bowery was rescuing the variety stage from its former low estate and engaging performers who later won fame in the legitimate.

It is greatly to the credit of the professions of arts and letters that they escaped the demoralizing influences of the Flash Age and preserved their self-respect through it all. Artists of the North River school that "modernists" affect to despise were doing honest work on very scant commons, and such writers as William Cullen Bryant, Bayard Taylor, George William Curtis, Donald G. Mitchell and F. S. Cozzens were at least upholding the dignity of their calling. Nor should we forget that the "Pfaff crowd," who called themselves "bohemians," numbered among its members George Arnold, E. C. Stedman, Fitz James O'Brien and Artemus Ward. Journalism was dominated by Henry J. Raymond, Horace Greeley and the elder Bennett, and, following the trail already blazed by Margaret Fuller, were those early disciples

of the "chatty" school who sported alliterative cognomens like Jennie June, Grace Greenwood, Sophie Sparkle and Fanny Fern. Whatever may be said of these writers and painters, pretense and vulgarity could not be numbered among their faults. It was at this time, too, that Thomas Nast, Bavarian by birth but American in sympathy, entered upon the work that contributed so largely to the overthrow of the Tweed Ring and gave him lasting fame as a cartoonist of tremendous power. . . .

The Flash Age came to a sudden and unexpected end in the autumn of 1873, after an existence of a little more than ten years.



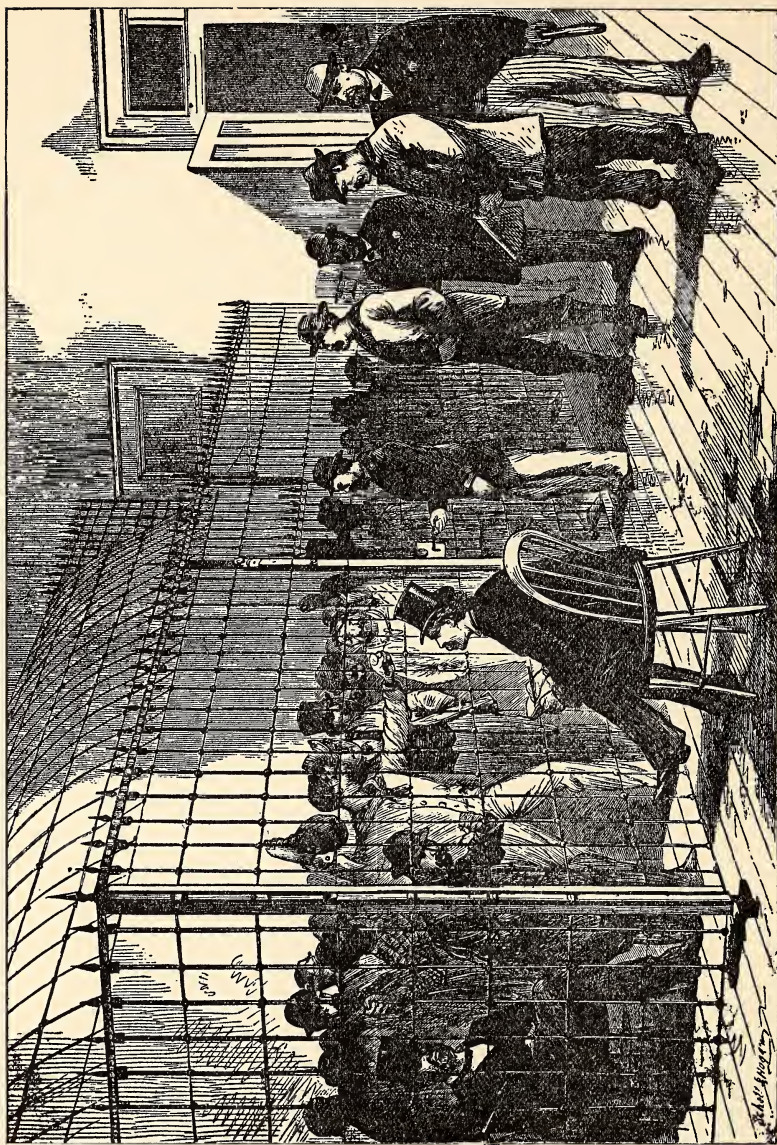
*The workingman's parade enrages the
New York police, 1871.*

It was followed by an era of commercial depression, the logical result of mad speculation and the over-building of railroads, in the midst of which the great Moody and Sankey revival gave time and thought for serious matters. . . .

The city has undergone many changes since the Flash Age came to an end in a single night, and in that half-century of material growth and moral and social betterment, commerce and finance have played a more important part than is generally understood. Streets from which decent families had been driven by vicious neighbors are now the centre of the silk or dry-goods trades and great loft buildings stand where disreputable houses once flaunted their loathsome business in the faces of passers-by.

. . . Commerce has reared the huge buildings that have given to the city its wonderful sky-line, and the same resistless force has pushed the area of paved streets and sewers farther north than even the original Astors ever dreamed of. Men of genius, energy and vision have accumulated through commercial undertakings great fortunes, and they have given of their wealth for charitable and educational purposes to an extent of which the world has no previous record.

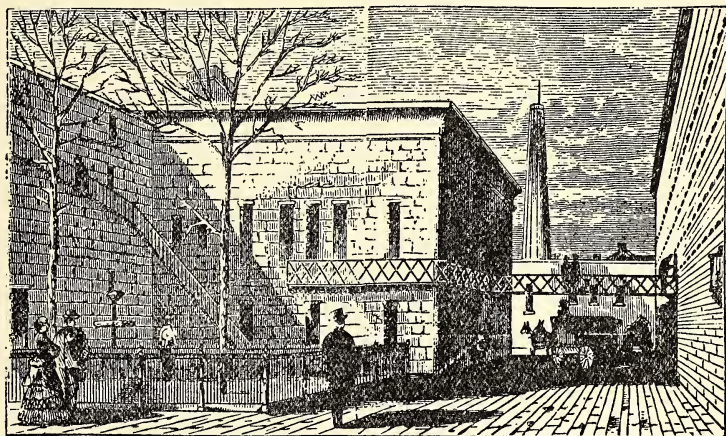
Politically, the city was completely under the domination of the infamous Tweed Ring, whose leader was soon to be arrested. In the meantime, vice was open and unashamed. Gambling houses flourished without restraint in the neighborhood of the Fifth Avenue Hotel and there were many "day games" in Ann Street and other localities downtown. Scattered all about the city were dives of a kind that happily do not exist now. In Water Street and vicinity were so-called sailors' boarding houses where mariners were shanghaied when drunk and awoke to find that they had been robbed and shipped aboard for a long whaling cruise. There were other evil resorts along the Bowery, and even in the basements of great Broadway business houses. Dance halls, frequented by the better dressed but equally vicious element, did business on Sixth Avenue near Thirty-fourth Street; and a notorious abortionist, of the upper ten, calling herself Madame Restelle, occupied a house on a conspicuous Fifth Avenue corner. Her suicide in her bathtub, when the police finally called to arrest her, caused consternation in high society. The police seized her confidential list of customers, which was known to have contained many names of members of prominent social families, both married and single. The town held its breath awaiting its publication in the newspapers. Such an item was just the sort of thing that old Bennett of the *Herald* considered it a sacred duty to publish and neither money nor influence would stop him. Many persons gave a huge sigh of relief when this private list mysteriously disappeared and was



*Illegal voters barred from temptation on Election Day. Commissioner
Davenport's cage for illegal voters, 1876.*

never heard from again. A comic paper called *Pink* and very popular in those days published a double page cartoon by Keppler captioned "Fifth Avenue Two Years After Mme. Restelle's Death." Needless to add that this fashionable thoroughfare was shown so completely jammed with baby carriages and nurse girls that Avenues A, B, and C hid their diminished heads in shame. *Valentine's Manual* says:

Crimes were frequent and many criminals were known by sight to the average well-informed citizen. The most sensational



The Tombs—Bridge of Sighs, 1870.

of these crimes, and one that still remains a mystery, was the murder of Benjamin Nathan in his house, No. 12 West 23rd Street, on the night of July 28, 1870. Mr. Nathan was an elderly and highly respected Jewish gentleman connected by blood and marriage with the most distinguished families of his race that the town contained. He was a banker and broker, a member of exclusive clubs and a person of influence in public affairs.

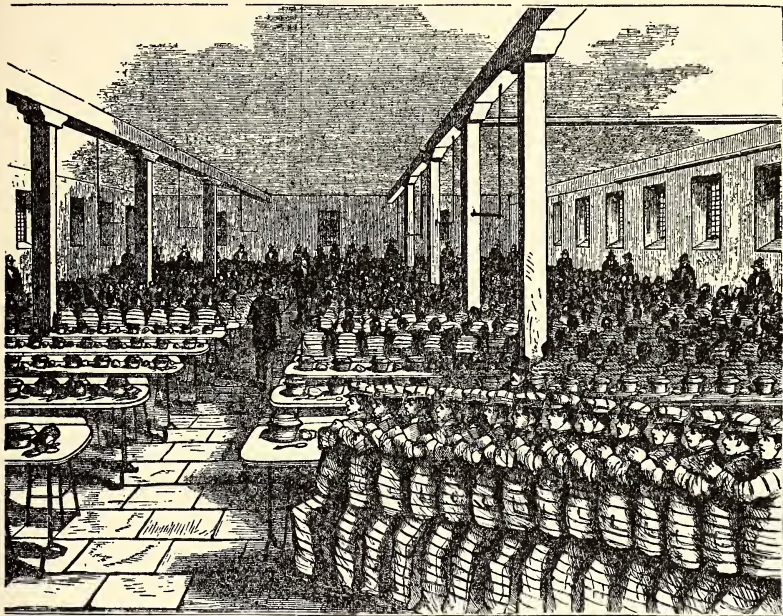
At six o'clock on the morning of the 29th a policeman passing the house was summoned by cries from two young men standing on the stoop, who told him that their father had been murdered in the night. These young men were Frederic and Washington Nathan and the night-clothes of the former, as well as his feet

and hands, were smeared with blood, the result, as he afterward explained, of kneeling beside the body of his father. The unfortunate gentleman had been attacked while seated in his night-dress at a desk, the instrument used being an iron "dog" about eighteen inches long, of a kind used by carpenters and frequently found in a burglar's kit. This weapon was found lying in the vestibule covered with blood on both of its sharpened ends. No less than fifteen blows, chiefly on the head, had been inflicted with this "dog," and there were evidences that the victim had not given up his life without a struggle. The door of a safe that stood in the room was wide open, its key missing, and on the bed was a small drawer containing only a few copper cents. Mr. Nathan had been staying at his country house, near Morristown, but, detained by business, had determined to spend the night in town. It was apparent to the police that his habits were known to the men or man who killed him and that they had not expected to find him in the house.

The announcement of the crime caused an excitement that has no parallel in the city's history. For days Twenty-third Street was blocked with masses of people who came to gaze at the windows of the room on the second floor in which the murder had taken place. Stagedrivers drove slowly past the house or else pulled up altogether to give passengers and driver a chance to stare at the spot. Even private carriages passed through the block all day in endless procession, their occupants leaning out of the windows to catch a glimpse of the scene. This excitement was prolonged and intensified by the revelations that followed in swift succession. The Stock Exchange instantly offered a reward of \$10,000 for the apprehension of the murderer, and this amount was quickly swelled five-fold by offers from other sources. The excitement verged on public hysteria when the rumor spread, gathering credence as it flew, that Washington Nathan was not guiltless of his father's blood. To those who know the veneration in which a parent is held by Jews of Mr. Nathan's high caste, such a thing is unbelievable, and many years later I learned from an authoritative source how the story originated. A sensational reporter in search of a "story" intruded on the members of the family when engaged in bewailing their loss in the devout fashion demanded by ancient orthodox custom, and the visitor was turned from the door without ceremony. Incensed by this treatment he wrote an article calling attention to the young

man's rather dissipated habits and his immediate need of money as motives for the crime.

The inevitable woman in the case made her first appearance on the scene at the inquest, whither she was summoned to give testimony in support of Washington's alibi. As she took the stand she gave a decided impression of beauty, refinement and good



Lock-stepping their way to dinner at Sing Sing, 1878.

taste, and great was the sensation among the spectators when she declared that she was an inmate of a notorious house kept by one Irene McCready at No. 4 East Fourteenth Street, and that "Wash," as he was known there, had spent the greater part of the night in question in her company.

Shortly after this a man named George Ellis wrote to Superintendent of Police Jourdan saying that if brought down from Sing Sing he would name the murderer. Brought with great secrecy to the city, he was shown more than a score of iron "dogs" of all shapes and sizes, and all smeared with blood, from which he at once selected the one with which the crime had been ac-

complished. Ellis said that he and a man named George Forrester had planned to rob the house during its owner's absence, but that murder was not contemplated, and on the strength of this statement a hunt was begun for Forrester, who had meanwhile disappeared from his usual haunts, and it was not until two years later that he was found in Texas and brought to New York, to be held for trial. Many years later Abe Hummell told me that Forrester then sent for him, confessed that he owed fifteen years to Joliet prison and asked to be sent there without delay.

"I have often been paid to save a man from prison," said Hummell, "but this was the first time I ever received a fee to send a man there, and I have never seen a happier face than that of Forrester when he set out to fulfill his long term."

Irene McCready retired from business and betook herself to the New Hampshire home of her childhood, where she died in 1899. After her death her two nieces revived interest in the crime by relating what she had told them about a visit she received the morning after the affair from a woman who kept an establishment in 27th Street similar to her own and who told her that one of her girls, a Spaniard of great beauty who had a key to the Nathan house, had been away the night before between ten and three. "There was murder done in that house last night," she added; "what shall I do about it?"

"Keep quiet," was the other woman's advice. "Wash Nathan can prove an alibi by Clara Dale," the name by which the witness at the inquest was known.

Looking backward to the old files of newspapers in the early '70s one is profoundly impressed with the tremendous gulf that separates that short period from the present. It is a dramatic contrast.

The Indians were giving us much trouble. Not a few of them made the long journey from the Far West to meet the Great White Father in Washington. In this way, we of the East came to catch an occasional glimpse of the red men whose goings on occupied so much of the sensational section of our newspapers.

It read like a dime novel. Sitting Bull, Rain-In-The-Face,

Crazy Horse, Two Moons, Red Cloud, Geronimo and the well-known names of our Indian fighters, Custer, Terry, Crook, Miles, etc.

The country was stunned by the frightful tragedy of the Little Big Horn. A whole company of United States troops utterly annihilated. Custer, he of the flowing locks—the ideal of the fearless fighters ambushed and mercilessly murdered! How could such a thing happen?

But it did, and the whole country was horrified at the ghastly story. Not a man in the command left to tell the tale. Everybody killed.

This proved the proverbial last straw that broke the camel's back. The Indians were finally rounded up and brought back to their reservation. They also experienced the wrath and the power of the Regular Army when it set out to do a thorough job. Their experience this time put an end to any more uprisings. Both sides received some hard—very hard—knocks. But the Indians finally realized that it made no difference to the Great White Father how many soldiers were killed. There were always more to take their places, and they came in constantly increasing numbers. It was useless to continue the unequal struggle, and peace was eventually restored.

Nothing seems so interesting in a way as to read these old dispatches in the daily papers of that day and to contrast it with the endless chatter of the movie stars of today.

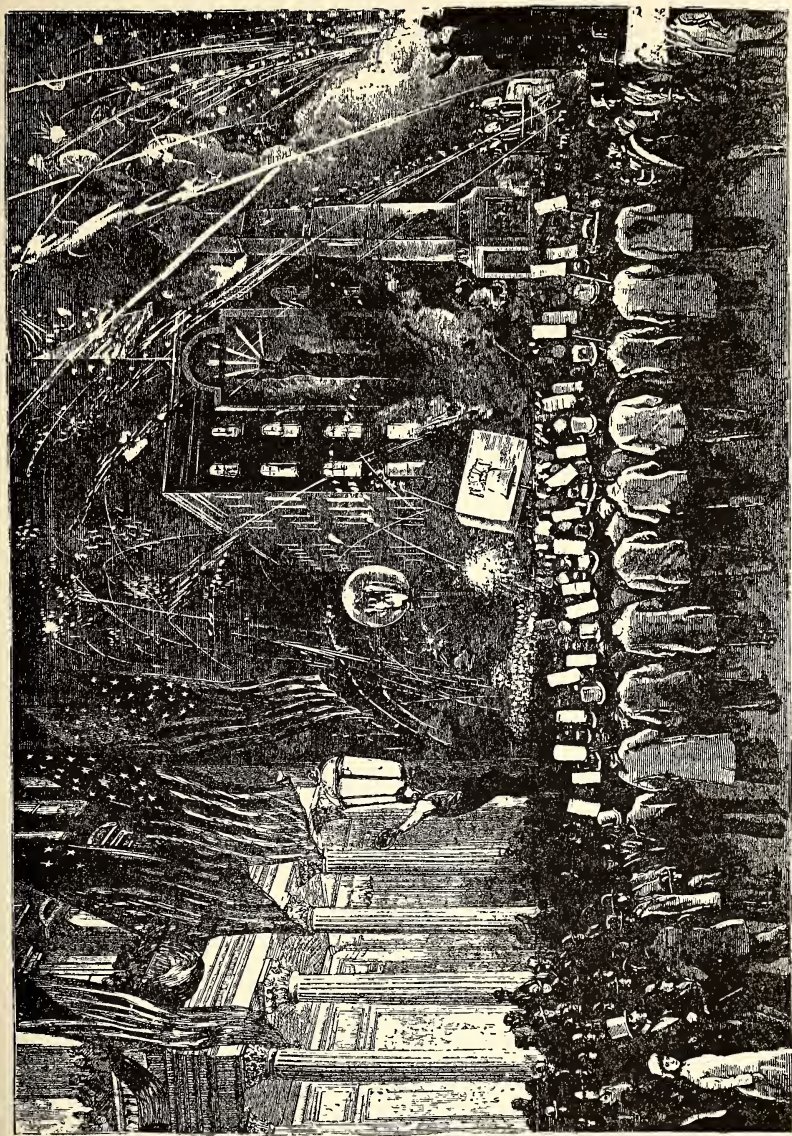
CHAPTER VI

Quaint Garb of New York

AN EVENT of exceptional national interest was rapidly approaching—the first Centennial of our Birth as a new Nation; and extraordinary efforts were put forth to celebrate the occasion in a manner suitable to so momentous an event. Plans were made for a great Exposition to be held in Philadelphia on our hundredth birthday. Committees were appointed to solicit the participation of foreign countries in our exhibits, and preparations were made for the most magnificent Fair ever held in the history of nations—and right royally were the plans carried out.

That particular Fourth of July was greeted with uproarious enthusiasm in all the leading cities of the country. In New York, “The Empire City,” the *Herald* tells us, “with universal public demonstrations of joy, stepped lightly and proudly into the second century of our National Independence. Such scenes of emotion as were then enacted will be told by our children to their children’s children and they will talk about them when they are gray-haired men and women. A great civic pageant ushered in the day’s festivities. At night the city was ablaze with the glow of twenty-five thousand torches in the hands of a marching host. It was indescribably beautiful. Houses, stores and public buildings were gayly decorated and brilliantly illuminated.”

The city itself had grown rapidly with the first hundred years of its existence, yet all over town there were still evidences of the bucolic existence from which we were just



The Centennial Fourth—illumination of Madison Square, 1876.

emerging. Tall poplars and sycamores still threw their grateful shade in many of our downtown streets. The plague of caterpillars, which formerly infested these trees, had fortunately disappeared and the business man no longer appeared at his office bedecked with these brilliant little "fuzzie wuzzies" denoting residence among the leafy bowers of Yorkville, or the bosky dells of Harlem. The ruins of the municipal birdhouses, erected at public expense by our kind-hearted Aldermen, for the comfort and protection of the English sparrow imported to devour these pestiferous insects, were still to be seen occasionally; but the efforts of our benign City Fathers were now engaged in devising a plan to emasculate the noisy, truculent and pugnacious "chippie," which, having devoured the caterpillars, were now engaged in devouring such of our native songsters as dared show their faces in the land of their fathers.

Of the city itself, as it was then, scarcely a vestige remains. The most notable landmark, viewed from the Bay, was old Trinity Church. For more than a hundred and fifty years—barring the Revolution when it was burned down—Trinity Church enjoyed the distinction of being the first building the mariner saw in New York as he sailed in from the sea, and the last to fade from view as he set his prows toward Liverpool or Java Head. From the spire of this old church, a magnificent view of the surrounding country for miles around was afforded. When Uncle Henry or Cousin Kate came to town, we had no telephones, no radios, no motor cars, no movies. A woman's crowning glory was still her hair. Looking backward, it seems like another world. Yet that delectable era of Annie Pixley cigars, peek-a-boo waists and the introduction of toilet paper was one of the most glamorous decades of the last century and marked a distinct milestone in our progress from the cradle to the grave. When it passed into history, it left us on the threshold of a second Renais-

sance that has already eclipsed most of the best performances of the Italian.

In those dark ages, cradles were considered something sacred and holy. Now you find them only in museums. "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother, Rock Me to Sleep," sang Elizabeth Akers and countless thousands echoed her cry. Today if you



These young gentlemen are not indulging in the filthy habit of smoking. They are only chewing toothpicks, the comforting and elegant practice so much in vogue in 1865.

attempted to rock a baby to sleep, someone would telephone the police to call for a demented person. Mother no longer takes Precious to her ample bosom and croons it a lullaby. She toddles little Skookums out to the piazza, there to yell its head off till it falls asleep from exhaustion.

There were also many curious superstitions and beliefs concerning babies in those days. Take, for instance, the "second summer." For some reason or no reason, every well-regulated infant was supposed to bid farewell to this dreary life in the "second summer." If he disappointed the family

in this respect, then he would turn out to be a bank robber, because Daddy had neglected to carry him up a flight of stairs the day he was born. But if on that dramatic day he had raised his right arm, howling lustily at the same time, you had an embryo Napoleon on your hands and Daddy's blunder was automatically cancelled.

There was also a peculiar idea concerning a very necessary toilet function—cutting the finger nails. If they were first cut with a pair of scissors, the baby would turn out to be a lawyer; but if they were bitten off by the mother's teeth, this frightful catastrophe was averted. And so this cannibalistic rite was performed by all mothers with religious avidity. Another idea was that if a baby fell out of its bed before it was eleven months old it would be a fool at maturity. I've often wondered if any of us ever escaped this unfortunate incident?

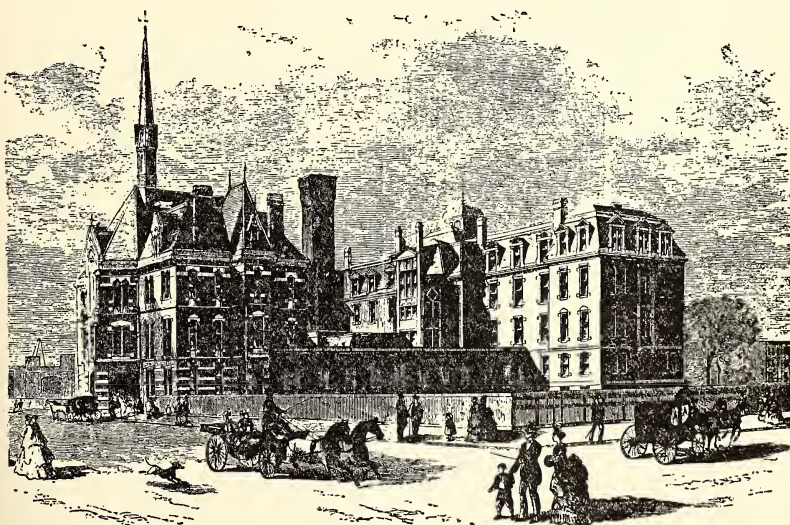
Infants always slept in the same room with their parents. It was rumored, at one time, that a certain young mother in my neighborhood with advanced ideas made her baby sleep in a separate room. All the other mothers promptly decided that such a heartless wretch was no better than she should be, and cut her completely.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup and other poisonous narcotics were freely administered to infants in those times, but a baby caught taking habit-forming drugs nowadays would find itself at once in trouble with the police. There were no baby foods. Mother's milk was considered the only fit sustenance for a newborn babe and the papers daily printed long columns of advertisements requesting the services of bereft mothers who possessed an adequate supply of this nourishment, which would otherwise go to waste. The wet nurse was a popular and numerous personage, and her calling attained the dignity of a profession.

When baby began to walk, his faltering footsteps were sustained by a long harness-like attachment such as older

children used in playing horses. These reins were about six feet long and mother at the end pulled and tugged, keeping the child upright and in the direction he should go. He was so thoroughly wrapped up in heavy flannel petticoats, padded dresses, padded diapers, padded bibs, padded hats, etc., that he could not hurt himself if he fell off a roof. How the poor little thing ever moved or breathed was a problem I was never able to solve.

Strange to relate, the average young American mother deemed it unutterably immodest to have a male physician attend her at her accouchement. Consequently, foreign midwives, of no particular intelligence, officiated largely at these events with a consequently high percentage of mortality. It was Marion Harland in her magazine *Babyhood* who first demanded knowledge and science in maternity cases. A band of young doctors were recruited, who were prevailed upon to specialize in this particular line. Braving the sneers of their



The Presbyterian Hospital, Fourth Avenue, between 70th and 71st Sts., 1872.

colleagues and the jibes of the general public, they set to work at once and this important branch of medical practice at last began to receive that scientific treatment which its importance demanded, with a corresponding decrease in the mortality figures and a great improvement in the health of the mothers. Yet for years they were derided as "sissies." We have greatly improved in many directions in the practice of obstetrics since then, but still have a long way to go compared with European Countries.

I think also that children were brought up more strictly in those days and their table manners at least were carefully supervised. Ours were, I know. We never acted like some of the rowdies we played with after school, who had no faith in second helpings and always said to their mothers, "Give me all I'm going to get on this plate." My brother, who was a good deal smarter than I, was always able to save a desperate situation. When unexpected company appeared for dinner and our favorite dessert seemed in jeopardy, he would say sweetly, "Mother, do you think the dessert will upset my stomach tonight or have you enough to go around?"

When mother left the nursery and appeared upon the streets she was like unto what the prophet had in mind when he described a human being as something fearfully and wonderfully made.

It also was an age of symmetry and modesty. Women took great pride in exhibiting the exact antithesis of the present popular boyish form. We liked our girls with plenty of meat on them in those days. The ideal figure was a waspish 18-inch waist—loudly denounced by the medical profession (and as usual without the slightest effect) the high voluptuous palpitating thirty-six bust, and a pair of wide and aggressive hips. Sometimes Nature provided all of these attractions; but where Nature failed, the kindly art of man supplied the deficiency. Numerous bust forms of padded cotton, inflated rubber and woven wire met with a ready sale. Sometimes dur-

ing a "spooning party," as we called it in those days, the rubber kind would collapse with a muffled bang, to the con-



The "Gabrielle" and "Princess," house-dresses, 1877.

sternation of the wearer and to the hilarious merriment of the party of the second part.

To the bust-form family, belonged also the bustle. This was a combination of braid and thin hoop iron designed to

impart a gently sweeping curve to what was then known as "the Grecian Bend." Shorter bustles for girls, imitating their elders, were made of dad's daily newspaper and sometimes brother's boxing gloves. It was considered quite a tragedy when, as sometimes happened, the buttons at the back of the skirt called the placket, accidentally flew open, exposing to the vulgar gaze of a heartless public, the ingenious contrivance by which the faultless figure had been achieved.

MADAM FOY'S
COMBINED
Corset, Skirt Support-
er, and BUSTLE



Is just the article needed by every lady who consults
HEALTH, COMFORT, and STYLE.
 Testimonials in its favor are constantly being received from all parts of the country.
Lady Agents wanted in every county of the United States.
HARMON, BALDWIN, & FOY,
Sole Manufacturers, NEW HAVEN, CONN.

"Health, Comfort, and Style."

White cotton stockings were universally worn. The first attempt at coloring was to introduce a design of circular stripes like a barber pole in red, green, blue, purple and other delicate pastel shades. Fast color dyes had not yet been invented and wearers of colored stripes invariably transferred them to their own pedal extremities in a more or less permanent form. When black stockings were first offered, almost anything was welcome in place of the interminable and monotonous white, and they were given a cordial welcome. But alas, the color though advertised as "fast," was fast only so far as it applied to its racing qualities when it started to run. But in time, permanent dyes were perfected and the white cotton stocking of beloved memory and distinguished service took its final departure.

The *robe de nuit* was a virtuous and voluminous affair which trailed on the floor. Most of them were made of



Back and front of street and walking costume, 1877.

"Fruit of the Loom," a highly popular material, also largely used for sheetings. They were cut high in the neck, with ruffles at the cuffs, almost covering the hands. Slippers were made of carpet and home-made knitted yarn with a leather

sole lined with fuzzy cotton. Although comfortable and warm, they were not fascinating in appearance. Older members of the family, both sexes, still clung to the rapidly disappearing night cap which, in those days, was made of linen. The beautiful though sinful concoctions which now parade under this saintly name, were unknown in those days.

House dresses were made of percale, seersucker, eiderdown and canton flannel. Mother was undoubtedly the forerunner of the present-day efficiency expert, as she carried, attached to her girdle, a chatelaine. This was a rather imposing affair, fine ones being made of sterling silver and beautifully chased. It was a wonderful step-saver. It contained places for the thimble, needle and thread, pocket knife, pencil, memorandum pad, pincushion, scissors, smelling salts and scent bottle. We were still in the age when to faint was fashionable; and these pungent smelling salts that would knock the roof off a barn, were always welcome. Mother Hubbards and shirt-waists were in the offing, but had not yet definitely arrived. The "best" dress was usually of heavy black silk that could almost stand alone and was expected to last a lifetime.

All women's shoes had very high uppers—reaching in some cases halfway to the knee. A woman bought a narrow top or a wide top according to the width of her pedal extremities. They had no legs in those days. Some rash young man who liked to be considered "fast" called them limbs—but legs, never. They were invariably buttoned up the side with a heavy steel button hook, or laced up the front over a "tongue." And the most popular model was called the Common Sense. As its name implies, it had broad toes, flat heels, heavy soles and would make the present policeman's shoe look like Cinderella's slipper.

Dresses in those days had very full skirts and trailed the ground. It took yards and yards of material to make them. On wet days these skirts would bring into the house a choice collection of sidewalk memorabilia. From today's point of

view, it seems strange that a gentle, refined, well-brought-up woman should ever have been consumed with an ambition to play the part of a street scavenger. In keeping with those skirts, the waists were buttoned severely up to the neck and whale-bone collars met the ears. Sleeves reached to the knuckles. Decorum could go no further.



Easter bonnets of 1877.

In contradistinction to the ample folds of the trailing skirt, the balloon-like effect of the leg-o'-mutton sleeves was the skin-tight woolen waist, known as the Jersey. This popular garment, on a Venus or Aphrodite, was a refreshing and stimulating sight; and when worn with a saucy tam-o'-shanter cap, the ensemble was not at all annoying to the eyes. This charming confection usually came in one solid color, red being the favorite. I think it was copied from a creation worn

by Lily Langtry, a famous beauty of those days, who hailed from the Island of Jersey and whose popular name among the gilded youth was the Jersey Lily.

I would need the pen of Carlyle to describe adequately the sensation caused by the young lady who first trod the streets of New York in a skirt without bustle or hip pads and that was actually three inches from the ground! Crowds followed her, shrieking with loud and derisive laughter. The name of this Nineteenth Century Joan of Arc was Miss Daisy Miller. She stoutly defended her innovation on the ground that it was meant for rainy days only. So in this faltering manner the first short skirt made its appearance, with many apologies to an outraged public opinion. It was at first suffered to exist only by reason of its utility, but that was so apparent that an army of "Rainy Daisies" quickly appeared, as they were called, and the new idea took sturdy root. The Bustle Era was doomed.

As we all know, the length of skirts continued to grow shorter and shorter till it looked as if the far-famed flower girdle of the South Seas would be the ultimate goal, while a few timid souls like myself were in a paroxysm of fear lest the fig leaf costume of Mother Eve would be chosen instead.

Preceding this movement, however, and coincident with the advent of the rainy-day skirt, came the tight-fitting tailor-made cloth suit introduced by the more fashionable set. The skirt of the tailor-made gown gradually grew tighter and tighter until we had the "hobble" skirt. Women could not mount a street car step without accommodating her skirt to the new effort and the world was suddenly made aware of the fact that women were now wearing hose. You got a very fair glimpse of the new scenery—a frightful exposure in those days—and so in the interests of better locomotion, the tight skirt was slashed up the side, giving us the sheath gown. This model naturally possessed the same sinful feature of the hobble skirt, only in a much greater degree. I regret to state that

its popularity with both sexes was immediate and undeniable.

The famous pompon bonnet was a conspicuous item in the wardrobe of the well-dressed woman of the Elegant '80s. This was something on the order of an inverted coal scuttle, surmounted by nodding plumes and tied with long flowing ribbons. It was made of straw. Its lurid decorations presented a miniature garden and orchard combined. Luscious red cherries made of glass nestled cozily against purple grapes stuffed with sawdust. American Beauty roses made of pink velvet disported themselves gayly between clusters of morning glories made of calico, and yards of baby blue ribbon, streaming from every angle, completed the dazzling picture. It weighed considerable and was held in place by formidable steel prongs called, by courtesy, "hatpins."

Bathing suits for the gentler sex were a far cry from the present-day one-piece affair. They were made of extra heavy blue flannel, in two virtuous pieces, trouser and skirt. The trouser reached to the ankles, the skirt below the knee. They were modestly but firmly held together at the waist by a belt. Stockings and bathing shoes completed the costume except for the hat which was a straw, the same kind and pattern we now put on horse's heads in summer. The holes designed as an exit for ears, were used to tie on the bonnet with a wide piece of velvet braid. In the water the garments must have weighed a ton and bathers made a deep puddle wherever they stood chatting after a dip.

The male contingent was similarly attired, except that he brazenly refused to wear stockings. Bare feet was the only difference, but this served to distinguish the male from the female. Beach parties were solemn affairs and the menu consisted solely of thick ham sandwiches and apple pie washed down with cataracts of lukewarm coffee. All was demure, somber and strictly virtuous. The two sexes were just beginning to rejoice in a new-found freedom—they were now

allowed to bathe in the same ocean together! A howl of indignation, however, went up from the purists when this scandalous concession was followed by one even more indecent—the books of lady and gentlemen authors were now allowed to adjoin each other in the library!

The first departure from this severe style of costume came

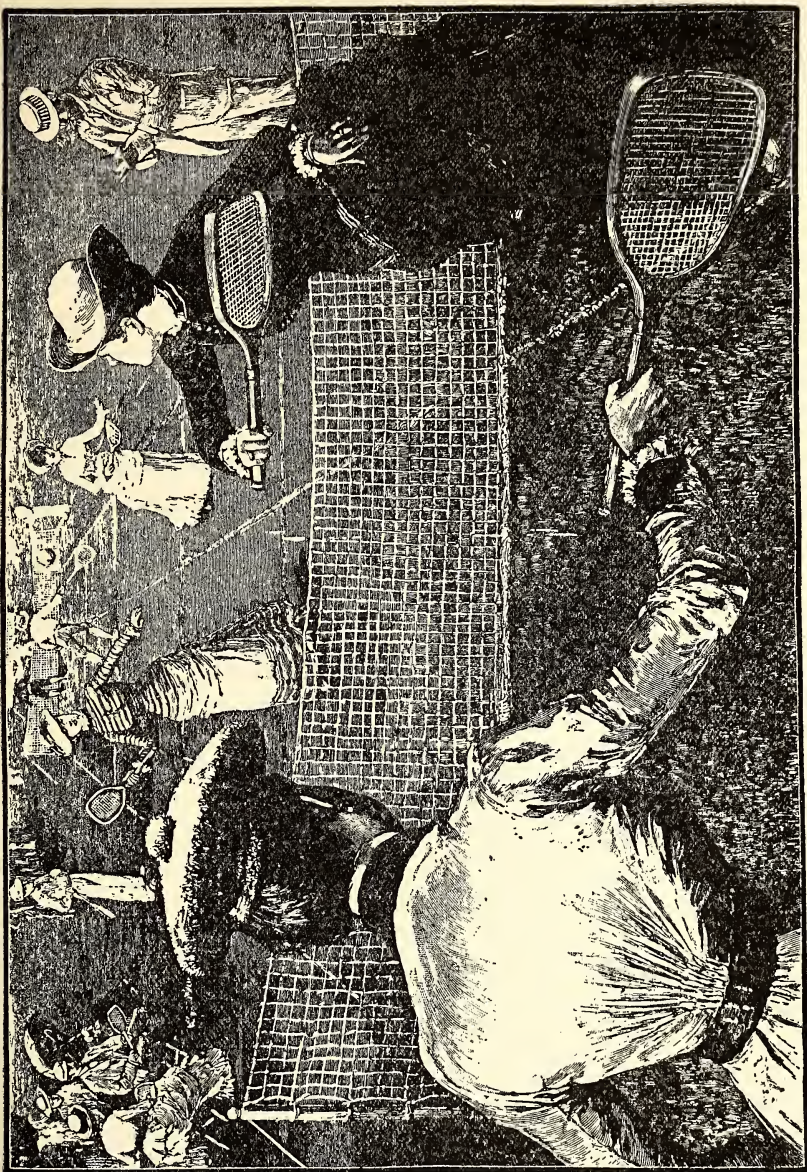


ON THE BEACH—A RECOGNITION. 1872.

Both parties in unison. "Why, is that you?"

with the introduction of white braid around the collar band and edges of the waist. The white against the dark blue was very striking. This was considered extremely daring and it led to other indiscretions. As the final result of this modern Rake's Progress, I ask you to look at the present-day bathing suit—the final offspring of this sinful white braid!

Sport clothes were non-existent, but the new fad—Tennis—just imported from England, was crying aloud for some distinctive dress. It simply could not be played in 18-inch corsets,



When lawn tennis was played on the lawn, 1885.

bustles, bosom pads and pom-pom hats. So a long tight-fitting gown made its appearance with a flounce from the knees and buttoned snugly up the back almost from the ankles to the neck. About half a dozen heavy flannel petticoats were worn underneath to prevent the slightest exposure of the lower extremities. A large leghorn straw hat with nodding plumes completed the costume. Thus attired, the Suttons and the Willses of that period were the cynosure of all eyes. Not to be outdone, the men adopted a canton flannel coat of many colors in loud and strident stripes, long gray trousers and a natty little peak cap colored to match their coats.

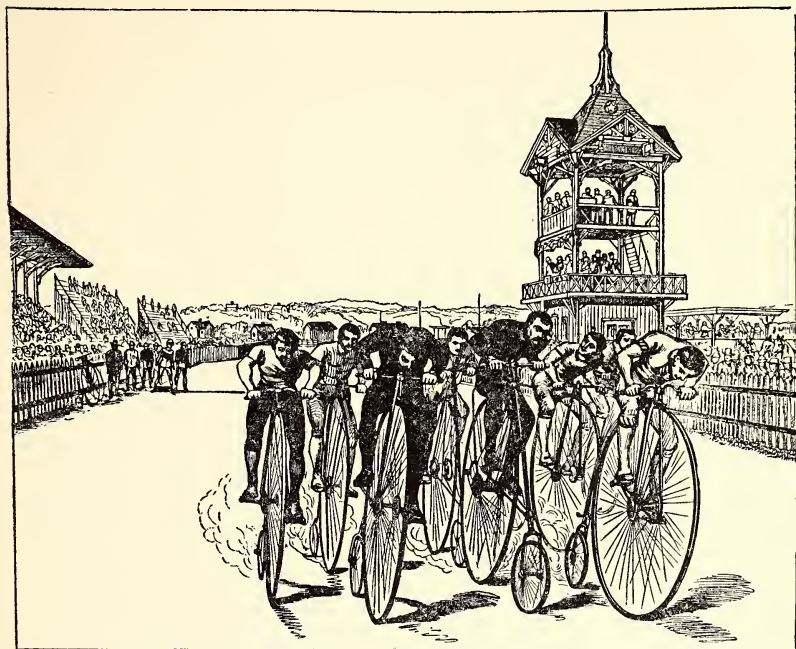
Aside from these, there was no suggestion of the handsome and appropriate sport clothes that were soon to appear and that have added so much to the pleasure and comfort of outdoor life around New York.

These were also the radiant days when "woman's crowning glory was her hair," and the Seven Sutherland Sisters, whose hair reached below their knees, were a popular attraction in drug store windows. They sold a priceless concoction, guaranteed to grow hair just like theirs on any head, or on a billiard ball, if heads were not available.

So the hirsute adornment of the belle of the '80s was something to inspire awe in the beholder. A huge roll of horse hair called a "rat," together with other pyramid-like structures called "switches," "waterfalls," "Chignons," "pompadours," braids, rolls, etc. etc. were part of every woman's capillary adornment. "Bangs" and "spit curls" ornamented the forehead and the temples, and were thought to be very "cute."

Of course, few women possessed a natural growth of hair sufficient to provide all the demands made upon them by these voluminous styles. Consequently, our imports of horse hair from South America were on a prodigious scale. There were as yet no "beauty shops," but gradually "hair dressing" parlors began to appear. They had none of the embellishments of the modern establishment and performed a service

that was more utilitarian than æsthetic. For the care of woman's hair in those days was a heavy physical task and an exhausting experience. Waiting hours for it to dry, combing the snarls out after a wash, all necessitated a wearisome strain



The Bicycle Tournament, 1885.

unknown to the woman of today. And yet what a fuss we men made when women first began to “bob” their hair.

Lip sticks and cold creams were unheard of. Face powder, however, was plentifully used and many a young man was finger-printed at dances—and elsewhere. Rouge was the only other face decoration I recall.

A sunburn tan was considered very common and denoted association with the lower orders. Women wore veils on every occasion and did everything to protect the pink and white

complexion so highly esteemed in those days. There were no manicures—the very word was unknown, and a young lady wearing deep red nails would have been kindly requested to leave any gathering she attended. Toilet accessories were few and far between. The beautiful modern bathroom was never even dreamed of. In fact, indoor toilets were still quite a novelty and probably fifty per cent of the average dwelling houses were still lacking this improvement. Lavatories inside the home, you must remember, were only just out of the experimental stage, and there were still many persons who thought them immoral, immodest, unhealthy, etc. The old outhouse did not die without a struggle, and the bathroom was far from being the refreshing, artistic attribute it is today in our domestic economy. Zinc-lined wooden bathtubs—in many instances plain roofing tin—with imitation mahogany rails to catch all the flying dirt and soap suds, with no hot water and no shower—the old-fashioned bathroom, was a depressing spectacle. It insisted, moreover, in having a tub at least six feet long which took an hour to fill, with one narrow pipe to provide the water.

Special scented bath soaps and other refined toilet articles which are considered a necessity nowadays, were then largely lacking. Cleaning the teeth was not the universal practice it now is and the multiplicity of nail polishes, files, bath brushes, Turkish toweling, mats, and electric hair dryers, were all still in the future. A bar of loud-smelling laundry soap was not at all uncommon in the bathroom, and there were no shaving soaps or talcum powders, now so generally used. It is not at all an exaggeration to say that among the most desirable improvements in household auxiliaries, the bathroom has probably enjoyed more attention from the inventor and designer than any other department in domestic economy, although it was the last to make its appearance on the scene.

Our ideas of Interior Decorating were bizarre, to say the

least. I think they were inspired by the beatific thoughts kindled in our souls during those delightful hours spent in the dentist's chair before the days of novocaine.

Take the Turkish Cozy Corner, for instance, which no doubt your mother has told you about. It occupied the best angle in the room and looked like a pup tent with a severe headache. It possessed a varied assortment of hardware, consisting of butcher's cleavers, which you were supposed to imagine were battle axes; blades from a pawnshop on the Bowery supposed to be from Toledo; swords from Damascus, New Jersey; scimitars, daggers, and other pleasant suggestions of the Caliph of Bagdad.

Its interior was cluttered up with innumerable burnt leather cushions, satin-faced pillows and crazy quilts, and the crazier the better. Flowing scarves, all a-glitter with tin stars and crescents, were over everything. Altogether, these *objets d'art* had little difficulty in persuading a respectable old army cot that it was a devilish divan in a real Turkish harem. On gala occasions, jars of alleged Oriental incense were burned and the guests coughed or suffocated, according to their powers of resistance.

But the effulgence of the Cozy Corner could not dim the lustrous brilliancy of the Rubber Plant. That always occupied the place of honor in the bay window of the "Best Room," used only for company and funerals. Its shiny green leaves were a patent of nobility and irrefutable evidence that in this house bode the prideful twins—Culture and Refinement.

Gilded Rolling Pins also occupied high station in the decorative world. They intimated in a perfectly unostentatious manner that the family no longer made its own bread, but were financially able to endure the strain of purchasing ready-made loaves at the grocer's, and were prepared to live on the scale demanded by such affluence.

Other interior decorations at that time were also bizarre. Piano legs were neatly tied with wide, baby blue sashes. The

coal scuttles were painted with landscapes and floral designs. Whisk brooms had pink ribbon tied at the top and were placed in a receiver on the wall, also decorated. Lambrequins and chenille curtains were everywhere—on the mantelpiece, over the piano and on the backs of chairs, and wherever else a place could be had on which to hang them. But the *pièce de résistance*, the bright particular star of the entire Victorian Renaissance, was undoubtedly the plaster cast replica of the Venus de Milo with an eight-day clock in her “tummy.”

We have greatly advanced in true culture since those days, decorative and otherwise. The old-time barber shop has now become the Tonsorial Parlor; the undertaker is now the Mortician; and the man who sold us a house and lot, is no longer a real estate man but a Realtor—a coined word from the Latin “real”—meaning “earth,” and “tor” from the Spanish, meaning “bull.”

Another very charming novelty which made its appearance at this time was the Folding Bed.

This ingenious piece of furniture was designed to camouflage its real purpose by assuming, during the daytime, various alien shapes such as that of a wardrobe, desk or chiffonier. However, the only one who dwelt in a state of illusion was its owner. Everybody else knew it was a folding bed, but the etiquette of the times forbade discussion of the subject. It was perfectly obvious that the bookcase in the library of an overcrowded apartment was a folding bed. Likewise, that the large cheval glass in front of an apparent wardrobe concealed another of the genus, but these innocent fictions were taken as a matter of course.

There was one type of folding bed, however, constructed with weights, that had a disconcerting habit, when its equilibrium was disturbed, of folding up like a jack-knife to the intense amazement of the occupants. For a stout gentleman to find himself suddenly awakened and standing on his head in bed was only a small inconvenience compared with the

imminent danger of asphyxiation that the situation afforded. There were a few cases of premature burial recorded in this connection, and this type of bed began to be regarded with the suspicion that it combined the functions of an ancient Moloch with its inducements to repose. It consequently declined greatly in popularity and is now largely extinct. The folding bed, moreover, has fallen under the hygienic ban and its use must necessarily decline. It has, however, found a niche in the modern miniature flat where it still acts as a door or a wall in the daytime, and a haven of rest at night. Where it combines these essentials, I think it is charged for in the rent as an extra room.

While the folding bed offered its diversions, it did not seriously compete with rummaging in garrets as an indoor sport, which, so far as New York is concerned, went out with the building of the "L" roads, and the passing of the gable roof in local domestic architecture. But its functions did not entirely cease then. All the early flats and apartment houses had "storage" rooms, both en suite and in the cellar next to the coals. Today "penthouses" occupy the erstwhile domain of the strange cat, discarded umbrellas and hoopskirts, and I trust that no realtor will be offended when I say that these high-priced sky parlors are just as hot in the summertime as any old-time attic, proving that the sun shines for all, in lowly cot or mansion grand.

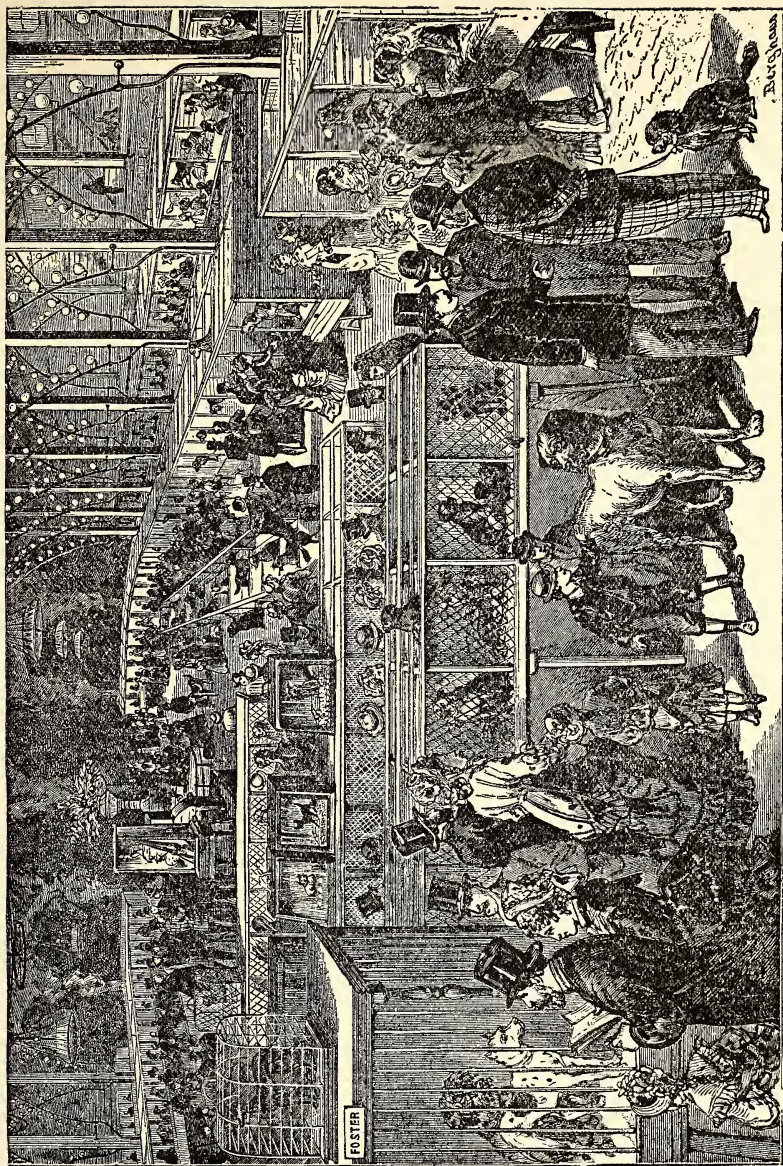
The old-time attic, moreover, had a fascination all its own. Now, I am not going into an idyllic reverie concerning grandma's wedding dress, or a poetic effusion on old samplers. It's out of my line. I can discourse learnedly on "Chestnut Bells," Congress gaiters, dickies, boiled shirts, reversible cuffs, chest protectors, liver pads, electric belts and other gaudy relics of President Grant's first administration, but I delicately but firmly assign the Empress Eugenie stuff to the bright young lady journalists who make the columns of our Daily Press such delightful compendiums of misinformation. It is so long

since I buttoned up a dress at the back that I feel a certain technical ineptness in the discussion and an "inferiority complex" to M. Chanel that I would fain conceal.

But the "Saratoga" trunk which every well-appointed garret possessed, either singly or in quantity, deserves a place in memory's lumber room. It was about the size of a small bungalow, with a curved top, which alone held the possible contents of a steamer trunk. I think the curved top was constructed so as to prevent baggage masters from piling another trunk on top. I may be wrong in this impression but I know that my own vocabulary has been vastly enriched merely by standing around baggage cars while they were being loaded and listening to the manual laborers within recite pastoral poems as they sought to establish a Saratoga center of gravity. But revenge is sweet, and the sight of a Saratoga trunk flying, like a Kansas farmhouse in a tornado, out of a baggage car and crashing down on a railway platform, I have no doubt, was one of the compensations in the life of a baggage man.

The trunk, itself, was remarkable for its longevity, and I have seen it in retirement from active service, standing amid cobwebs, almost audibly defiant, and ready for another trip on the People's Line to Saratoga or Richfield Springs, the Stonington Line to Newport or Narragansett, the New York & New England Railroad to the White Mountains, and other fabulous routes of transportation. Packing a Saratoga trunk was one of the extra-scholastic arts, like carving a duck, and I have no doubt that if its problems confronted us today there would be special departments in our universities established to grapple with them.

In the old Saratoga trunk may still repose that venerable relic of Civil War days, the red plush Photograph Album, introduced originally for the specific purpose of preserving the tintypes of the lads who went forth to battle. They had a long life and were a prominent decorative feature of every parlor for many years.



The Dog Show in the Hippodrome, 1877.

The Saratoga trunk also recalls to me that its heyday was in a period when the fashionables all sojourned in summer to "take the waters." After a hectic winter of twelve-course dinners; of canvas-back duck, terrapin, Chambertin, Pommery sec, and rare "fruity" old port, a retirement to the "Spa" afforded a grateful intestinal diversion. Everything from gout to fallen arches was supposed to yield to the "springs." The old family doctors knew what was wanted and prescribed accordingly. If you lived on Fifth Avenue you were packed off to Carlsbad or Homburg or Saratoga. If you dwelt on a side street in less ornate style, the ticket read Richfield or Sharon Springs. Some old offenders got Lebanon Springs or Massena Springs for their sins—ancient spas redolent of Daniel Webster and Henry Clay—with some of the hotel accommodations of their day—old wooden caravansaries with enormous piazzas on which French windows opened from the parlors. Oh, those Brussels carpeted parlors. I can see the square rosewood piano, the steel engravings of Landseers's "Deer Stalking in the Highlands" and "Bringing Home the Buck"; the marble-topped table covered with the woolen tidy on which reposed an enormous gilt-edged Bible, fully illustrated with engravings from Genesis to Revelations, which nobody ever opened but children who looked at the pictures. Occasionally, the piano might have been heard agitated by a maiden lady of uncertain age (no one else ever touched that piano) and "Sylvan Echoes" *By The Celebrated Composer of "Woodland Whispers"* would steal out into the gloaming and adjacent regions.

I can see the vast barrack-like dining-room to which the guests were summoned by a huge gong, which had remarkable qualities of attraction. I can see the darkey waiters with their elaborate flourishes of towel and napkin. I can see the huge platters of meat and the ridiculous little saucers of vegetables and side dishes arranged like a battery fronting the guest. I can see the bedroom with its black-walnut bed, its ditto washstand with the enormous water-pitcher and basin, its scented

soap and thin towels, and the absurd bureau with the diminutive drawers with pendulous handles like bell pulls. I remember the Saturday night hops, and hubby coming up from the station in the carry-all, in a white plug hat and an alpaca duster, bearing, besides his valise, the latest number of *Frank Leslie's, Chimney Corner*, or *Demorest's Family Magazine* to while away the hours between draughts from the therapeutic waters. There wasn't much going on at these resorts of the more or less decayed gentry; croquet and riding and driving enlivened the outdoors, but if it rained one might spend a thrilling afternoon looking through the stereopticon at "Views of the Centennial Exhibition" or "Scenes from Ausable Chasm."

Along with the Saratoga trunk was the horsehair furniture. Who that has survived the Horsehair Era will ever forget its slipperiness or its upright hairs that suggested the fretful porcupine?

The austerities of the Horsehair Age were not entirely without mitigation. The well-known "woman's hand"—the one that smoothes the fevered pillow when pain and anguish rack the brow—was even here at work as it was years later spending a whole summer on a veranda hand-embroidering "drapes" to hang over the crayon portraits in red or blue plush frames of two sinister-looking relations hung in the parlor without, however, successfully obscuring those grim visages. I wonder how many matrimonial chances were blasted when young women ushered their swains into the best room and pointed out these counterfeit presentments as near relations? That the girls of the '70s never suspected the devastating possibilities of these mural handicaps is one of the mysteries of my otherwise astute and sagacious understanding. Laura Jean Libby once wrote a story entitled *When His Love Grew Cold* and I am ready to affirm that it must have been based on a first sight of one of these crayon Rembrandts. That they were libels on worthy and otherwise inoffensive persons,

who if given the chance, might turn out likeable acquaintances, hiding hearts of gold under rugged exteriors, did not avert the catastrophe. No one, viewing the crayons, would have given the originals credit for more than fifty per cent of the mentality of a congenital idiot; a girl had to possess considerable powers of fascination to entice the gaze of an anxious wooer from those brooding gargoyles over the mantelpiece, and it was a triumph indeed, if they were eventually neutralized by the sharp-shooting Cupid.

But, as they used to say in polite circles in those days, *re-tour aux montons*, and I have to tell you of another phase of interior decoration, that was, if possible, perhaps a shade more inane than that hereinbefore mentioned. This was recalled to me recently by a book of designs showing the possible achievements of the bracket or fret-saw. I have no doubt that the gloom of the horsehair parlor placed this lethal instrument into thousands of hands that would otherwise have been commendably idle, for its ravages were among the outstanding cruelties of the time. This is the blurb on the book of designs, "Fret-Sawing has become an art of such wonderful popularity that the interest in it has been shared by both amateurs and professionals to an astonishing extent. Ladies and Young Folks find in it a fascinating recreation. *and are making dozens of fancy articles at small cost to decorate their homes* in a charming manner or to give as Holiday Presents to friends." (Italics mine.) All one needed was a saw, a thin piece of board and a certain degree of imbecility to turn out "Match Boxes, Ladies' Work Baskets, Easels, Paper Cutters, Calendar Frames, Pen Racks, Thermometer Stands, Fruit Baskets," and that vague but terrible miscellany known as "*Fancy Work*."

The aptly named "fret"-saw contributed only partly to the litter that succeeding decades consigned to attic oblivion. There are distressing recollections of a wastebasket of silver perforated cardboard, handkerchief boxes, ditto; folding

screens, ditto; in fact, an interminable assortment of cardboard rubbish that always had to be folded up before it would go into the furnace door. But this was not the half of it, sir. There was also cone-work to be considered, articles made of pine-cones, fir-cones, beach-nuts, acorns, etc. These were fastened with glue to wood, cardboard, leather or anything that would hold an adhesive, and many "chaste and elegant articles" resulted. For instance, there was the Almanac-frame. "A frequent walk," according to a book of instruction in cone-work, "through the woods and forests, will bring all the materials directly within easy reach of every lady who desires to construct such a frame." If you had an almanac-frame, then you might perpetrate a key-rack, or a hand-glass, or a magazine portfolio, or a lamp mat, or a lambrequin, or a hanging basket. Nature was lavish; but if you felt the need of more color, you might add fruit-pits—peach stones were very nice—and even coffee grounds might be worked up into "chaste and elegant" designs, especially on "cherry-colored glazed paper." A tasty *étagère* involved the use of juniper berries and chestnuts. "Many small things can be put in by means of glue; as for instance, an acorn here and there, a tiny oak-apple, the extreme joint of a cone, besides other things that will easily occur to the fair operator." "Very handsome boxes for envelopes, stereoscopic slides, etc. can be made by tastefully covering old cigar-boxes, or empty boxes in which gentlemen's collars have been kept. In fact, the cones may be applied to the decoration of a great variety of articles, which would be otherwise useless, and perhaps meet the fate of household 'rubbish' generally."

"Wall-pockets" were another manifestation of this craft, and an idea of the underlying mentality which produced them is found in another quotation from the genial tutor: "Probably no one article of modern invention and ingenuity has afforded greater satisfaction than wall-pockets. It is certainly a great comfort to a tidy housekeeper to have all things in

her abode in a state of perfect neatness, hence these wall-pockets, and all their class of relations are blessings." These were adorned with colored pictures. "Even the fruit and flowers upon fruit cans, tastefully arranged, may be formed into many beautiful designs." What a field for art has been opened since the development of the canning industry.

The framework of many wall-pockets was made of old hoopskirt springs, and it is a question in which capacity they were most absurdly employed. These "catch alls" began in the front hall and frolicked incontinently throughout the premises, and the result was a domestic filing system that delighted the efficiency expert of the day. The hall-pocket received gloves, mufflers, etc.; those in the library harbored letters, periodicals, newspapers, and on occasion cigar stumps and match-sticks. The bedroom contained an extraordinary accouterment of pockets, including a bed-pocket "as serviceable as it is ornamental. It is provided with small pockets to contain handkerchief, flask and the like, and two hooks on which to hang a bunch of keys and watch." There were pockets for slippers, shoes, shoe brushes, whisk broom, soiled linen, etc. "These pockets are very stylish, hung upon each side of the bed for holding night clothes, necktie, collar, or other articles removed at night from the person"; while a lady's chamber demanded a hairpin case conjured from "a cluster of cornucopias, pinked around the edges and ornamental with pictures to correspond with the other articles; bright ribbon bows on each, and all of them fastened on where fancy dictates, and attached as suspension loops."

Then there was "A Set of Wall-Pockets for the Toilet," including a sponge-basket, lined with oilcloth "to which are attached six pieces cut in shape of oblong pentagons," and a battery of pockets for the kitchen, including an enormous sheath for an ironing board, flanked by repositories for a duster, scrubbing brush, string, iron holder and other house-keeping sundries. None of these take into account wall-

pockets devoted to such purposes "as fancy dictates," and as they were all of the most perishable materials, they formed the most abominable outfit of dust-traps and vermin harbors in the history of civilization. It was an age of sentimental rusticity. Damsels pressed flowers and leaves in books, as mementoes of some fond tryst, which later found their way to the second-hand book dealers. "Specimens" were collected and there was a great knowledge of foliage in the land. Even printing was conspicuous for rustic characters. Look at your old magazine covers. Piazza and garden furniture was rustic, instead of enameled iron. From the Black Forest came shiploads of cuckoo clocks to give households a confused notion of time. (Did anyone ever see a cuckoo clock in order?) Rustic picture frames were universal. People wanted Nature with the bark on. Currier & Ives farm and sporting prints, marriage certificates, diplomas, resolutions of the United Order of Woodmen, or the Benevolent Association of Foresters and similar certificates and testimonials, were thus framed.

Nor was the cone-working amateur excluded from exercising talents in more rugged woodwork, and our before-mentioned guide contains the following admirable paragraph:

"There are two ways of considering a Norway spruce. One way is to stand off and admire its noble outline, as it rears itself, a pagoda of living green against the sky, with its story upon story of fringed branches, its beautiful long, pendant cones, and its delicate hue seeming dark because of the rich masses of foliage. *The other way is to approach with a knife in one hand*, the corners of an upheld apron, or the handle of a basket in the other, the head inclined a little on one side, and a resolute, pursed up, *'I'm going-to-cut'* expression on the face.' Alice and I often regard our Norway spruces in this last practical fashion, and when we do so it is because, in our mind's eye, we see something hanging there besides the beautiful long, brown cones. *We see lovely easels and picture frames*, and a host of pretty objects which will be just the

thing for Christmas presents. So, as resolutely as the sculptor begins to chip from his marble the fragments that are hiding his imprisoned statue, we plunge into the tree, intent upon freeing our brackets, easels, and whatnots from the concealing embrace of its long sweeping branches." Here, again I acknowledge the italics. This, however, was only the prelude to a general assault on the Norway spruce, which eventually yielded rustic armchairs, garden tables, match safes, napkin rings, pincushion holders, reading stands and a perfect wilderness of other non-essentials.

Perhaps the most characteristic form of rustic work was the motto-frame that enshrined the worsted-worked quotation over practically every rural mantelpiece in the land and even in the parlors of city dwellings. During our "æsthetic" period, these were relegated to the garrets or the second-hand dealers, but they have now become "Americana" and are highly prized as mural decorations in Cape Cod cottages in Queens County, Cotswold houses in Flatbush, and Tudor mansions in East Orange.

There was a popular song which enumerated some of these righteous, though sometimes lugubrious, mottoes. I do not recall it entirely, but the chorus was something like this:

God Bless our Home,
In God We Trust,
Kind Words of Welcome to All,
Love One Another,
What is Home Without a Mother?
Are the mottoes that are framed upon the wall.

I should like to tell you more about this age of decorative innocence—or guilt—but I don't want to wax encyclopedic in the details of picture frames of beans and rice, or rice and barley, pincushions of pop corn, frames of putty or cat-tails, or even bundles of straw fastened with ribbons and glue; of

“table collections” of sea mosses; of “moss brackets” of “spray-work” and “spatter-work”; of grapevine mirror frames; of knickknacks composed of silver-leaf (saved from tobacco packages) and plush. Sometimes a hardy relic appears in a “rummage shop” and is gazed at curiously by our sophisticates whose own modernistic eccentricities will, no doubt, some day, bring the smiles to the lips of their posterity, if any.

CHAPTER VII

New York Sentimental and Finicky

BEFORE we leave the home of our hospitable host, I would like to describe some other usages and customs common in that era that now differ greatly from our own.

Every young lady then, owned an Autograph Album. This was generally in appearance like the red plush photograph album in the "best room." It had gilt edges with the loveliest robin's egg blue paper interspersed with salmon, gray, pink, buff, and a few other shades. It was the custom of her friends and acquaintances to indite verses, tender, facetious or admonitory in this treasury of mementoes. "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever" was a favorite sentiment of a reprobate old uncle or cousin. Similar incongruities fell like pearls from the pens of spinster aunts. Gawky puppy-lovers wrote carefully studied verses taken from *Gems from the Poets* in flowing Spencerian hands. Every visitor was primed with a rhyme or a couplet in anticipation of the inevitable "Oh, Mr. Jinks, won't you write something in my book!" Whereupon you would dash off impromptu:

You ask me to write something original
But I don't know where to begin,
For there's nothing original in me,
Excepting original sin.

or this:

The inner side of every cloud
Is bright and shining.
Therefore turn your clouds about
And always wear them inside out,
Just to show the lining.

Perhaps you felt more ambitious than usual with the following result:

In after years when you recall
The days of pleasures past,
And think of joyous hours and all
Have flown away so fast.
When some forgotten air you hear
Brings back past scenes to thee
And gently claims your listening ear—
Keep one kind thought of me.

Here, however, was the one great stand-by:

In the tempest of life
When you need an umbrella,
May it be upheld
By a handsome young fellow.

A signature was a portentous thing in those days. A Gentleman with an elegant set of Galway whiskers, a plush coat and cameo cuff buttons, was not inclined to execute his cognomen in any meager or cramped fashion. The name of "Alonzo B. Cheesecake" was written far into the night in violet ink on an azure blue page, to obtain the inimitable flourishes beloved of the "business college."

The old autograph album is a tender memory, nevertheless. We may look at some of the old verses differently today; but when they were fresh on the page they produced many a delightful thrill.

Our pleasures in those days, as you have doubtless observed, were simple and inexpensive. We also generally provided as far as possible our own amusements. Chief among them, I would say, was the amateur elocutionist. She was usually a sweet girl graduate in a white dotted Swiss dress, with her golden hair hanging down her back. Her hands were innocently crossed in front. Outwardly she gave no intimation of the devastating power that lurked behind this guileless and



Skating in Central Park, 1877.

alluring exterior. It was not until she began to shriek "Curfew shall not ring tonight" that you began to suspect what was in store for you. That was generally followed by the "Face on the Barroom Floor." Then there was the "Bingen, Fair Bingen on the Rhine" or "The Shooting of Dan McGrew." But her crowning achievement was undoubtedly "The Charge of the Light Brigade." The whole room would be filled with the cries of the wounded and the groans of the dying. And when she finally admitted that the charge was a fizzle, we were all glad that some of the buddies muddled through, even although it was not-not-the-Six Hundred! Comic relief was furnished by our Pastor, a very thin person with extremely weak lungs, who always sang "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep"!

Strangely enough, the greatest sensation produced at this time by any performer, professional or otherwise, was made by an amateur elocutionist—Mrs. James Brown Potter. At a gathering of a noted hostess in Washington, attended by a glittering galaxy of world-famous personages, Mrs. Potter recited a poem called "'Ostler Joe," written by George R. Sims, a distinguished performer in the lachrymose School of Poesy. The hero, 'Ostler Joe of "The Magpie," a small country tavern near dear old Lunnon, was evidently a prototype of the agriculturist so feelingly described by Mr. Markham in "The Man With a Hoe"; but he was probably a little higher in the social scale than the well-known Brother to the Ox. At all events, 'Ostler Joe apparently talked like a load of hay, and "fair Annie," his wife, in time became rather surfeited with the saintly atmosphere exhaled by the quadrupeds and bipeds of "The Magpie." And, of course, the inevitable villain appears in the shape of the city swell and in the end Annie departs from the soul-saving protection of the sturdy yeoman of her native village and flees to the wicked metropolis. Some idea of the moving pathos which pulsated through the poem may be gained from the first verse.

I stood at eve when the sun went down
By a grave where a woman lies,
Who lured men's souls to the shores of sin
With the light of her wanton eyes.
Who sang the song that the siren sung
On the treacherous Lorelei Light,
Whose face was as fair as a summer day
And whose heart was as black as night.

In the second verse the plot thickens.

In the summer when the meadows
Were aglow with blue and gold,
Joe, the 'ostler of the Magpie,
And fair Annie Smith were wed.
Plump was Annie, plump and pretty,
With a face as fair as snow.
He was anything but handsome,
Was The Magpie's 'ostler, Joe.

Then Mrs. Potter went on to tell how Joe was rubbing down the 'osses when he was told that he was the father of a boy—"such a blue-eyed baby boy." Joe is so highly pleased that right then and there he gives his charges a double feed of clover, "Just in honor of his heir."

There's no use going into the remainder of the harrowing details. You can easily imagine the rest—the elopement, the abandonment, and the final forgiveness and death.

It was not a wonderful or even an unusual poem. It was, however, for those days, decidedly off color according to Victorian standards, and in consequence, Mrs. Potter suddenly found herself on the front page of every newspaper in the country. I do not now understand why this third-rate poem caused such a tremendous sensation, but it did. Society was rent asunder regarding its propriety. The Press was filled for weeks with letters of protest, and ministers denounced her from every pulpit. Meanwhile Mrs. Potter continued to give "'Ostler Joe" whenever invited, and when she was scheduled

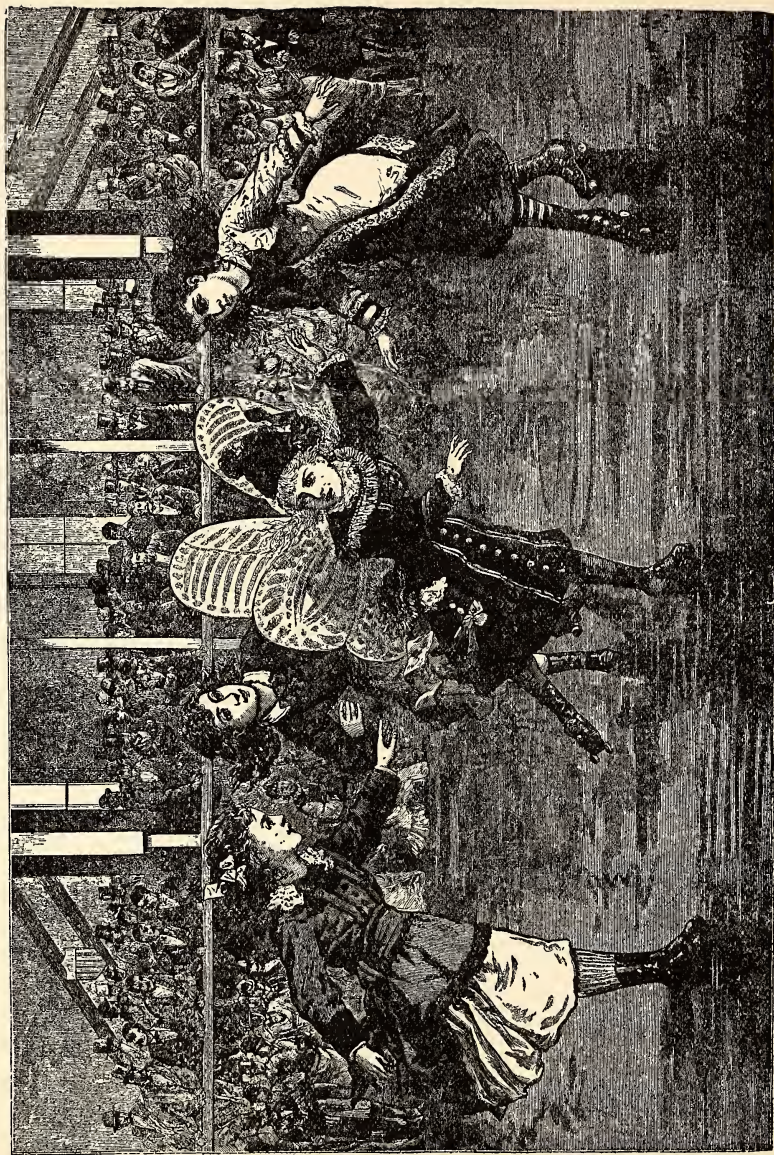
to appear there were no declinations to that affair, you may be sure.

Her social prominence and her churchly connections had much to do with the excitement, I think. Her husband, Mr. James Brown Potter, was a prominent banker in New York and a kinsman of the famous Bishop Henry C. Potter, rector of Old Trinity, and head of the Episcopal Diocese in New York. She was therefore socially, as well as episcopally, a prominent figure in Society. Her husband and her own family were greatly shocked by the publicity of the affair and sought by every means possible to persuade Mrs. Potter to desist, but to no avail.

The applause and the nation-wide notoriety evidently went to her head. At all events, she sailed abroad, leaving a little daughter behind her. She finally entered upon a stage career and toured the world with Kyrle Bellew, a well-known leading man at that time. There was a great deal of unpleasant talk about this connection, and her husband secured a divorce. She was never again received by New York Society. The little girl she left behind is now Mrs. Fowler McCormick.

Besides the parlor elocutionists, we had outdoor sports equally simple and inexpensive. The younger children found amusement in many games that now seem obsolete. A favorite pastime that seems to belong in this category is rolling the hoop. I remember when every child had a hoop and there were various sizes, some a great deal taller than the owner. Most of these hoops were wooden, but some were of iron and were guided by what you would take for a poker in the days of open fire grates. These pokers were not only to speed the hoop, but were skillfully used in guiding it and also to bring it to a halt. Oh yes, rolling a hoop was a great sport at one time.

Nor do I run across groups of children playing various games to the accompaniment of an itinerant organ grinder's music. One was:



"The Chase of the Butterfly" on roller skates at the Brooklyn Rink.

Little Sally Waters
Sitting in the Sun
Crying and weeping for a nice young man.
Rise, Sally, rise, wipe off your eyes,
Turn to the East and turn to the West,
Turn to the very one that you love best.

This was played by a dozen or more girls who circled around one who sat in the center of the ring until the song said, "Rise, Sally, Rise." Whereupon she would rise and finally choose one of her companions as the one "She loved best," who would thereupon take her place in the ring.

Another equally popular game was entitled "Jenny o' Shea" and involved quite a little acting. One girl sat in a corner and a dozen or less other little girls, all holding hands, would advance and retreat, singing meanwhile:

I came to see Miss Jenny O'Shea,
Miss Jenny O'Shea, Miss Jenny O'Shea,
I came to see Miss Jenny O'Shea
And how is she today?

The first verse elicited the information that Miss O'Shea was not very well, whereupon the group fell back, singing:

I'm very sorry to hear it, to hear it, to hear it,
I'm very sorry to hear it,
I'll call another day.

Miss O'Shea lingers through several stanzas until finally the sad news is communicated that Miss O'Shea is dead. All the children then burst into cries of mock grief, and then another girl is chosen while the same performance is repeated *ad infinitum*. Ada Rehan in Daly's Theatre gave a delightful rendition of this childhood rhyme in a play called *The Country Girl*, and it was easily among the best things she ever did.

Nor do I think the boys today have the variety of sports they had in my day. All that boys play today are supervised games. Where do you see a boy today with bones or clappers, lashing a top or snapping the whip, always the first sign of spring in the old times? Boys of today go in for men's games. Kite flying that made Ben Franklin famous is almost obsolete. Nowadays boys disdain the simple kite. Marbles have attained a position of semi-professionalism. I always had a pocket full of "realers," "glasses," "alleys," and "agates." There was a wonderful variety of tops from the penny whip tops just mentioned, to a rainbow-tinted beauty that had a mechanical arrangement to revolve it. Boys matched to see whose top would spin the longest. There were lots of indoor games, too, before people went to the movies, such as indoor croquet, parchesi and bagatelle.

The famous "Pigs in Clover" game was an obsession of the late '80s. It concerned five little leaden pellets which were manipulated in a glass-covered round box. The object to be attained was to assemble the pellets in a cavity in the middle of the box. This philosophic occupation engaged the attention of a large proportion of the population of the country to the exclusion of almost everything for many months. In my opinion, it did little else than supply corroborative evidence of the truth of Carlyle's assertion concerning the majority of England's population as did its enchanting predecessor, the 13-14-15 puzzle.

This 13-14-15 puzzle rivaled the present cross-word puzzle craze, but did not last so long. It involved some mathematical skill akin to the etymological requirements of today's cross-word puzzle, and presumably this is an inborn trait in all human nature.

The return of the harmonica to popular favor reminds me that this was the favorite instrument of the street boy of the '80s in the creation of home-made melody. Then there was the accordion and the concertina, whose strains came floating

on summer nights over backyard fences for the benefit of all and sundry. There were a great many more amateur musicians then than there are today. The mechanical musical devices of the days of Moody and Sankey were limited to the



The "Ladies' Match" at sixty yards, 1870.

hand-organ and the Swiss musical box. The modest perforated paper roll of the hand organ was fortunately highly developed and now shines forth in gorgeous cases in wealthy homes as player pianos and electric organs.

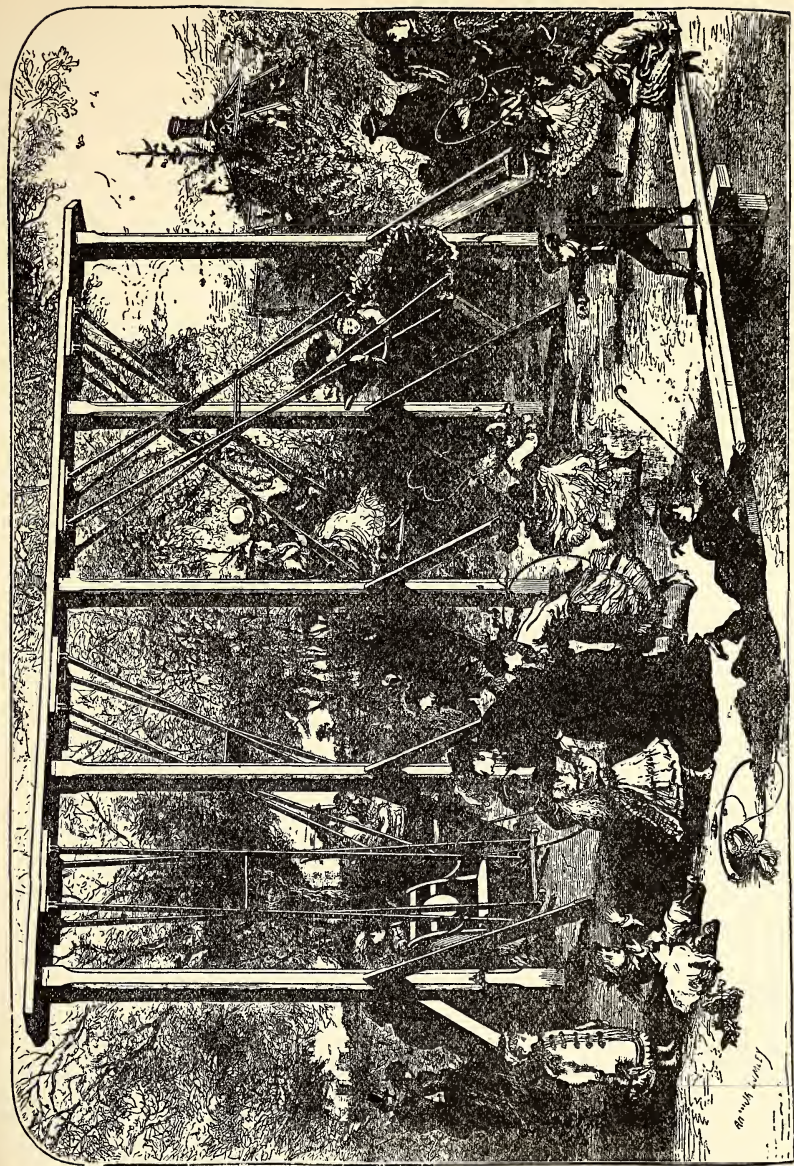
The musical box existed in many degrees of pretentiousness—from the child's toy that looked like a caviar tin and played

"The Sweet Bye and Bye" as you turned its little handle, to the elaborate rosewood-cased mechanism, with chimes, that played a repertoire enumerated on an ornamental cardboard under the lid. The musical box sometimes assumed the shape of a cart or wagon that played a tune as the wheels turned. There were also a large number of musical toys on the market, such as zithers, zylophones, toy pianos, drums, trumpets, etc. There was a great sale for whistles and they were found attached to riding whips, pop-guns, and even to baby corals. Today children seem to depend upon Municipal playgrounds for their amusements and even have teachers to show them how to play. That seems unnatural to me, but I suppose I just haven't kept abreast of the world's progress.

Such things as Summer Camps for boys and girls not yet in their 'teens would not, I am sure, have been countenanced by their stern parents in these bygone days. As a matter of fact, vacations for the older people were but slowly issuing from their chrysalis. They were not yet universally obtainable. And those delightful juvenile organizations, the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts, were yet in the land o' dreams.

There were no entirely clean-shaven faces in those days. Every man wore whiskers of some sort, and the taste in facial ornament was as diverse as the men themselves. Some wore Galway Sluggers, Mutton Chops, Burnsides, Dundrearies, Beavers, while others preferred Mustaches, Goatees, Imperials, etc. You never knew what kind of facial decoration you would see next.

A very fair type of the popular styles the well dressed men wore, is exemplified in the portraits of our amiable friends, the Smith Bros. They are excellent illustrations of the modes then prevailing in the better informed classes of polite society and may be considered as periodically authentic. Other well-known characters like Peter Cooper and Horace Greeley cannot be regarded as representing any type except their own. Both these gentlemen no doubt possessed the fatal gift of



The swings in Central Park, 1871.

beauty, but it was effectually concealed behind the semi-circle of fringe which enclosed their classic features and gave them the aspect of two sidewalk merchants seeking to sell you suspenders or lead pencils.

There were no safety razors in those days and the general custom was to patronize the local barber twice a week. If you were a permanent customer, the barber provided you with a special mug with your name in shiny gilt letters on the outside. Some went so far as to add a symbolic sign indicating the nature of your business or profession. Thus, if you were a plumber, you were shown mending a gas leak, with *all* your tools in front of you—not one forgotten! If you were a butcher, they would picture you with your hands on the counter gazing ecstatically at a large piece of meat on the scales. It was considered bad form to depict the butcher weighing his hands in with the meat. If you kept a saloon—we had four on every corner in those days—a foaming bucket of suds would be on the reverse of your cup. This friendly atmosphere did much to create a spirit of camaraderie within our charmed circle. One brush, one towel and the same soap did for all. A great sensation was created when one Knight of the Razor advertised “A Clean Towel for Every Customer,” which was declared financial suicide by his envious rivals. While waiting your turn, you perused such unrighteous literature as the *Police Gazette* and the *Day's Doings*. *Puck* and *Judge* were also carried as a camouflage for the unregenerate pink sheets. A shave cost 10 cents and a hair cut 15 cents. No tips, and journeyman barbers worked seven days a week.

The shop was usually run by a German, who invariably kept a canary, and was a sort of social center. Scented oils, heavy pomades, bear's grease and brilliantine were highly popular, and when you left that barber shop you not only had the latest neighborhood scandal but all the perfumes of Arabia as well.

Outside the barber shop “Dot leedle Cherman Bant” was

sure to perform. The streets were filled with itinerant musicians in those days—organ grinders, whistling coons, and an occasional solo singer of considerable power, if not merit.

The German band would essay "*Die Wacht Am Rhein*," but all you could hear would be the "oompah"—"oompah" of the big bass horn. When they gave the *Star Spangled Banner* or the *Marseillaise*, it was the same old oompah!—oompah!

There was a pair of real genuine Southern darkies that I particularly remember. They whistled "Listen to the Mocking Bird" in a marvelous manner, and as an encore would give us "Old Black Joe," "Way Down Upon the Swanee Riffer," or "My Darling Nellie Gray" in a way that I would give a good deal to hear again. Whistling was quite the rage at that time. There was a Mrs. Shaw who gave Whistling recitals at halls and private parties, who was deservedly popular. She afterwards went to London and had great success. All these itinerant musicians were eventually banished from the streets; and I am afraid, when the organ grinder departed, the little children of the poor lost a great source of pleasure. They used to gather round the smiling Italian, dancing and playing games. "Little Sally Waters" was one, "London-Bridge-is-Falling-Do-w-n" was another. And I think there was a suspicious moisture in the eye of the Mayor when a delegation of organ grinders came humbly before him to beg for exemption against the edict of banishment, which he had to refuse.

Among our more intimate attire, the most significant article that I recall was "medicated" red flannel underwear. Promptly upon the approach of cold weather all we normal men were immediately encased in this health-possessing garment by our solicitous helpmates. In some peculiar manner, a strange and unreasoning faith prevailed in the efficiency of this peculiar garment to prevent colds, asthma, fallen arches, dandruff and nearly all the other ails to which human flesh is heir. I cannot account for it. Nobody could. It was simply

an accepted fact. And it was many years ere its therapeutic value was even questioned.

Another curious remedial idea swept over the country in the '80s. It was known as the blue glass craze. Blue glass was suddenly endowed with supernatural powers. It would cure everything from suicide to a broken neck. Every house had to



Sunday morning in Central Park—drinking mineral water.

have one blue glass window and more if they could afford it. Many families built special piazzas composed almost wholly of blue glass. It seems to me that this was the forerunner of the present violet ray epidemic. There is hardly a doctor, especially in nervous troubles, who will not prescribe violet ray treatment for whatever you have. And in my humble opinion the only difference between Blue Glass rays and Violet rays is that the former cost you comparatively nothing and the latter will easily enable you to avoid an income tax for years, before you're all through with it; and the results are about the same. Even to this day you will occasionally see a blue

glass window in some old house—a relic of this once universal craze.

The present practice of keeping a crease in one's trousers was very bad form in those days. It was the unfailing sign that you bought your clothes ready made. Almost everybody did, as a matter of fact, but we liked to make others believe that ours were "made to order," and this crease in your trousers showed that it was taken from a pile of others in the store. So the first thing you did was to carefully iron out all the tell-tale marks of the ready made.

Styles in men's clothing made lightning-like changes. One season their trousers would be so tight that you put them on with a shoe horn and the next would be exactly the reverse—the legs as wide as a flour sack. The Prince Albert was largely worn as formal evening dress—few swallow-tails were worn compared with today—and those mostly at balls or weddings.

Headgear ran into many and diversified shapes. Derbies were at first so low crowned as to be almost flat. Then they shot up into a small-sized top hat. Straw hats were black and had very narrow brims. Even when yellow straws came in, there were no colored ribbons. High hats were made of gray felt and were very popular. Black silk "toppers" were rare and far between. Soft hats were called "slouch hats" and worn only while putting around the house or fishing.

Shirts had terribly hard and stiff bosoms and were invariably *white*. Colored shirts didn't appear till much later. The shirt opened in the back only. Later they opened both back and front. When fashion decreed that they should open at the front only, they were proudly announced as "Coat Shirts." Coats and vests were worn in summer as well as winter. The shirt waist for men created quite a sensation when it first appeared and met with no little hostility. Its great comfort in hot weather speedily established it in popular favor and it soon ceased to create any comment whatever.

Curiously enough, the now well-known Tuxedo coat orig-

inated at a small dance given by a Chowder Club on the lower East Side of New York and might have died an untimely death but for a lucky incident which brought it immortality. Social etiquette in the East Side is something as sacredly regarded and as strictly enforced as in the purlieus of Park Avenue, and the ever-growing use of the formal dress coat with long tails for evening wear was a cause of grave concern to the East Side arbiters of fashion. They solved the problem by following a path marked out for them by previous experience. The bosses wore cutaways at business, but the tails of these garments interfered with their other and more pressing duties of packing, driving and delivering goods, just as the swallow-tail did with their dancing. So they affected a short coat in place of the cutaway for business, and decided to do the same thing with the swallow-tail—cut off its tails likewise. They thus unconsciously achieved a sartorial triumph never contemplated in the original plans.

On the famous night when Carmencita danced at Mr. Lorillard's newly formed Tuxedo Country Club, one of the younger bloods wore one of these abbreviated swallow-tails in the hope that he would achieve that immortal fame that is his who sets a new style. He did. His name was George Griswold. No doubt, he had caught a glimpse of this coat in the neighborhood of Lorillard's New York office in Water Street. The name Tuxedo naturally attached itself to the garment and the language was enriched by a new word meaning dinner jacket, and Griswold was the man of the hour.

CHAPTER VIII

Horse Cars and the Atlantic Cable

WE WERE still in the age of horse-drawn cars and stages. It seems as if it were as long ago as the dark ages since Broadway's famous stages ceased to run. Yet it was only in 1884 that Jake Sharp obtained a franchise from the Board of Aldermen for a street car line on that populous thoroughfare, replacing the picturesque vehicles that from time immemorial had given to Broadway an individuality and a Wild Western atmosphere that was seen on no other great thoroughfare in the country.

In his laudable effort to improve our transportation and enhance his personal future at the same time, Mr. Sharp brought unspeakable anguish to many members of the Board of Aldermen, who had bestowed upon Mr. Sharp this exceedingly valuable proof of their affection. Many of them, as a result, were impelled to go far from the madding crowd and seek a temporary sojourn in a charming residence owned by the State on the beautiful shores of the Hudson. Here, amid the beauties and glories of the lordly Highlands, many of these gentlemen were compelled to seek a respite from their harassing labors and enjoy a protracted period of meditation and introspection. Others, scorning the attractions of so near-by a resort, proceeded feverishly northward, finally taking up their abode with Our Lady of the Snows. Yet both places, notwithstanding their undoubted attractions, were considered by our ultra-fastidious aldermen as too far from the main street in our village, and much wailing and gnashing

of teeth followed their enforced removal. Mr. Hugh Grant, then a member of this august body, escaped every effort to connect him with this troublesome franchise, and New York rewarded him by making him Mayor and bestowing upon him the bewitching title of "Honest Hugh."

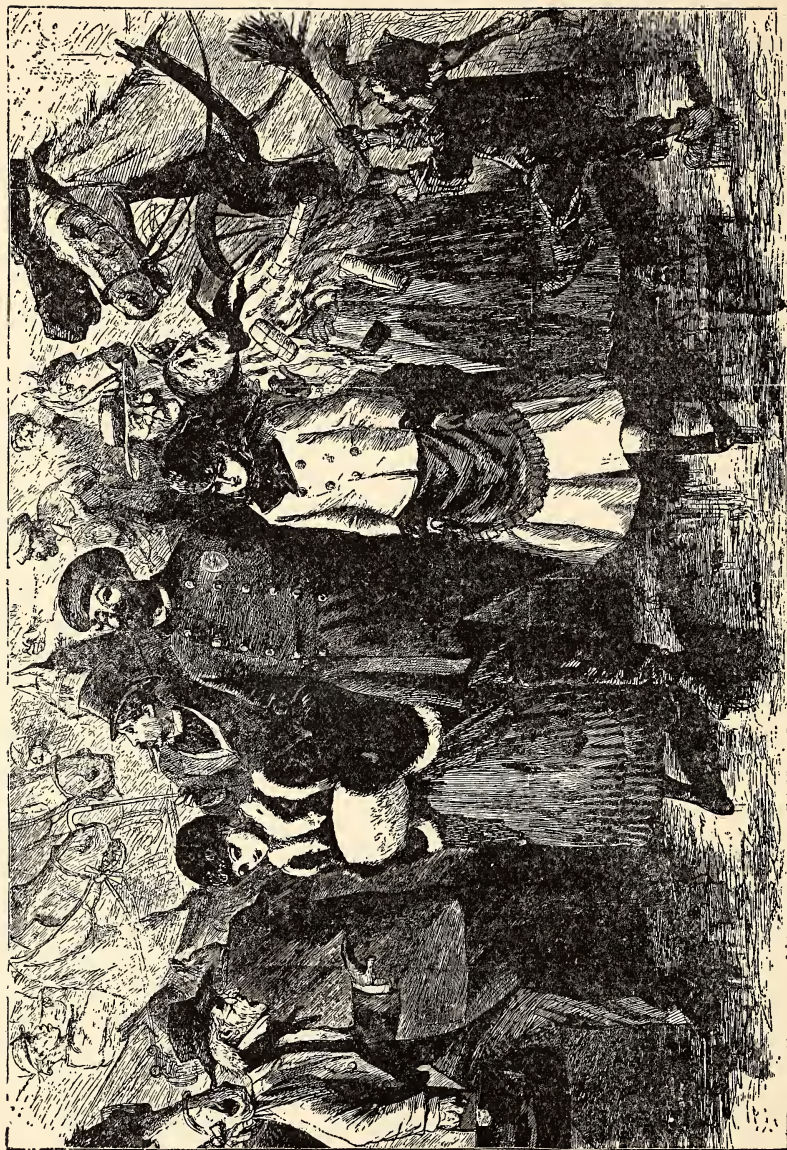
When Jake Sharp's street car line opened, the old stages were sold as junk and dispersed throughout the country. It was passing strange to reflect that once these vehicles owned our streets and in a proud, defiant way ground timid pedestrians under their wheels and bumped unoffending carriages and carts. Now they had become an object of curiosity and contempt to staring countrymen.

No man except a New York stage driver knew how to drive a Broadway beauty. He alone knew how to shave a lamp post or to keep in front of a rival and take his pavement. Only years of experience enabled him to master the mute language of the strap and to know by the slightest pressure on his knee, whether the strap was pulled by a pretty girl who should be allowed to dismount close to the sidewalk, or by a fat man who should be dumped in the middle of the street where he could minister to the rational pleasure of the public. Divorced from its natural habitat, a stage loses its interest in life and feels degraded when a countryman climbs to the driver's seat, takes the reins in his incompetent hands and places the strap across his dull, unresponsive knee. In its exile, it no more resembles the stagecoach of Broadway than the Indians of Saratoga resemble the Indians of Cooper. In its new life, it has become the most depressing of all vehicles, and as it waits to convey passengers from a railway station to a hotel or to carry a Sunday School picnic to the grove, where rheumatism awaits the teacher and cholera morbus the children, we can not but mourn to think how the mighty are fallen.

These stages were started and stopped by means of a strap attached to the door and connected with the driver's leg. A

pull on this strap notified the leg that a passenger desired to enter or leave. Fare was deposited in a box in view of the driver. Change to the amount of \$2.00 was also furnished by the driver, who further possessed colossal reluctance to return the correct amount. An envelope supposed to contain this amount in small coins was passed to you by the driver through a small opening in the roof connecting with the driver. The opening automatically closed with the passage of the money. Through a small window you could see the back of the driver's legs, but that was all. As a short-change artist, the Broadway stage driver had no peer, and he had this additional advantage—it was difficult to discuss finance with merely a pair of unresponsive legs. The irate changee amused the passengers, however, which the driver knew was his only function, and he paid no further attention to him.

A flock of these buses, careening up Broadway from one side to the other, presented an animated scene. They swayed wildly and gloriously in a mad race with their rivals. Ever and anon, one soul more adventurous than another, would essay the perilous feat of cutting a rival out of a fare. This was accomplished by a sudden spurt, putting one stage ahead of the other to enable bus No. 2 to swing to the curb just in front of No. 1 where the passenger awaited, and carry him off in triumph. A terrific volley of profanity would follow a successful sortie of this nature, followed not infrequently by a savage attack with the whip when the two coaches were abreast. This playful performance always made an irresistible appeal to the spectators on the sidewalk and was greeted with uproarious applause by the impromptu audience. Small boys, who had a weakness for sitting with the driver, who appreciated this failing and also invariably relieved the boy of the annoyance of putting his fare in the box, were sometimes the innocent victims of these conflicts and their discomfiture added greatly to the already enjoyable performance from the sidewalk point of view.



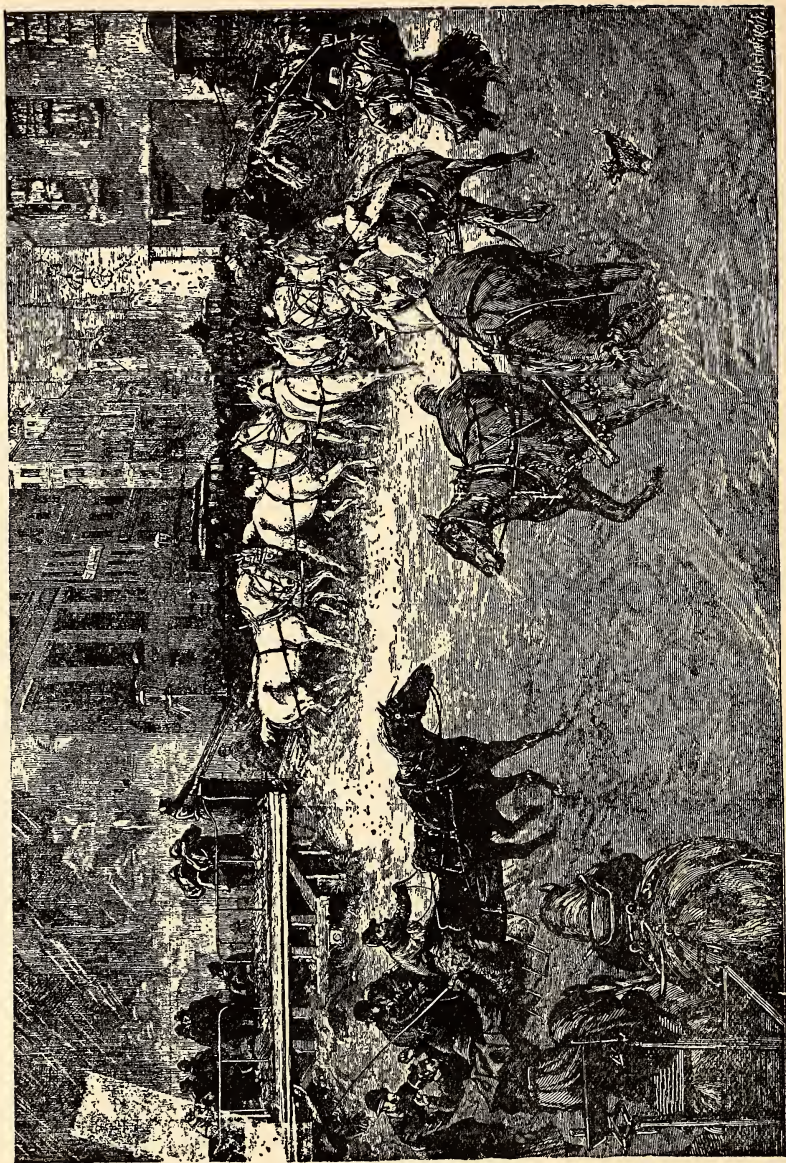
Crossing Broadway safely, 1870.

Years afterward, when they had already become a legend, these old stages were still to be met with here and there in obscure hamlets, bearing the legend "Broadway and Wall Street," "Madison Avenue and Broadway," etc., but they were shabby and demoralized. Their paint was old and worn, and their varnish had lost its luster. Some of the famous paintings which adorned their panels, "Wm. H. Vanderbilt driving Aldine and Early Rose," "Robert E. Bonner, speeding Dexter," and other interesting bits, were still carefully treasured, but not because they were painted by Will Low, Elihu Vedder, E. H. Blashfield, and other artists who were afterwards to climb the ladder of fame, but because they would not come off.

And so the old Broadway stage which originated in the West and was for so many years the City's pride and boast, eventually returned to the land of the setting sun, there to disappear and never again be seen in New York.

Horse-drawn street cars had now clearly outlived their usefulness; but for lack of satisfactory substitute, they continued to function, though it was plainly inadequate. The service was abominable, but no more abominable than the shameful overcrowding of the subway today.

Some lines maintained a service known as "bob-tail cars," a primitive form of one-man control, now once more in favor among the economists of our traction systems. These were half-portion cars without conductors, the drivers of which were provided by the company with small change in envelopes to expedite the collection of fares, which were deposited by the passenger in an illuminated box behind the busy driver of the decrepit vehicle. There were many heated disputes regarding the performance or non-performance of this essential ceremony. There is a case on record in which a young man, claiming to have been "short changed," proceeded to collect the deficiency from incoming passengers, to the intense mortification of the driver who summoned a



Clearing snow from the railway tracks, 1877.

policeman. The abstruse legal problems involved were finally argued in court, and the young man admonished, in the future, to seek his remedy in less summary proceedings.

Of course, there were many instances, in which passengers, usually boys, would deliberately seek to defraud the company of its legitimate revenue. In these cases, the driver would call the attention of the dilatory passenger to the oversight, by rattling the fare box and tapping the window with a most urgent violence. It was not always possible for the driver to single out the delinquent, perhaps an active young man, who had boarded the car without the formality of bringing it to a stop. The period during which the fare box rang incessantly, was one of great embarrassment to the other passengers, each of whom stared fixedly forward lest a sideward glance be interpreted as an accusation of his neighbor and a fistic encounter result.

An unrestrained and passionate desire for heat in these vehicles in winter was answered by a liberal allowance of straw. By some occult form of reasoning, this commodity was believed to possess this desirable property, and every car was equipped with a bale or two, loosely spread upon the floor. On wet days, the virtue of straw was further enhanced by the addition of mud. The combination of wet straw and wet mud was supposed to answer every æsthetic demand of the day, and was accounted an unquestioned luxury by a simple and confiding public. It certainly had its advantages from an economic standpoint, as the straw was subsequently a prominent item in the menu of the stables.

Lighting was furnished by means of dismal, violent-smelling oil lamps, one at each end of the car, and a resplendent central fixture, generally in a condition of smoke and disrepair. There was a good deal of camaraderie among the heterogeneous, long-riding passengers, especially when composed of mellow Irishmen and complacent Germans, warmed by unrestricted alcohol, and an occasional Chinaman or two

as universal butts. Although the comic papers drew pictures showing a youth of twenty boarding a Harlem car to emerge at the terminal an old man with a white beard almost touching the ground, the trip was no joke at all.

The city was still full of many precipitous hills on the way uptown, so at each of these ascensions were stationed "hill horses"—an extra team to assist in dragging the overloaded cars up the steep incline. When the East River section was still a favorite residence section among the well-to-do, the Third Avenue line ran a special "drawing-room" car to meet the fastidious demands of its patrons. An extra fare of 10 cents was charged for this exclusive accommodation and it succeeded in keeping out most of the proletariat, which was its main object. The late Stuyvesant Fish told me the road had no right to charge over 5 cents, and every once in a while some well-informed laborer would insist on riding in this special car, carrying his hod and shovel with him, and refusing to pay more than a nickel. He always won out. The company didn't want any test cases.

The Fourth Avenue line charged a 6 cent fare—the only line which enjoyed this patrician privilege. It is quite impossible to describe the hauteur, the superciliousness with which the conductors and drivers of this line looked upon the common herd who drove 5 cent cars. They acquired an air of exclusiveness, laboriously absorbed by close observation of the manners and customs of their aristocratic patrons; and their social aspirations outside of business hours were closely modeled upon those of the *haut ton*. It was wonderful what a difference one cent made.

Matters had now reached a stage where the city had to do something. Street cars had had their day. They could no longer provide the service the growing city needed, and at last steps were taken to consider some alternatives.

When the problem of rapid transit was at last approached seriously by the first Rapid Transit Commission, appointed

by Mayor Wickham, various methods were discussed. About the only thing the Commission could decide upon definitely, was that "*underground bores were out of the question!*" They generally favored the elevated plans, which were finally adopted.

To the credit of this first Rapid Transit Commission be it said, that within one year of its appointment, it had ordered the Greenwich Street line extended up Ninth Avenue to Harlem and also commenced the Third and Sixth Avenue lines. The Commission promised to provide cars enough to carry *fifteen thousand* passengers daily! They were apparently wildly enthusiastic, as this was supposed to be far in excess of any possible requirement and was hailed with delight by the community. Seats would be certain for everybody.

When a company was finally organized to raise the necessary funds for the undertaking, the capital was \$100,000, I think. The great objection raised by the subscribing public, was that no one would climb the stairs. Ultimately, however, enough reckless gamblers were found to purchase the bonds at a huge discount, in spite of this objection, and construction was soon after successfully accomplished. At first we carried time-tables just as the commuter does now; the fare was originally established at 10 cents and the conductor went through the car collecting the fare from each individual passenger in a small tin box, as they now do in the Fifth Avenue buses. The engines were named after more or less prominent citizens well known in their day, but now wholly forgotten. This neighborly and friendly custom obtained for many years. As late as 1884, the light travel on Sundays induced the management to reduce the fare to 5 cents from 5:30 A.M. to midnight. This movement was hailed with great satisfaction by the public, the *Tribune* saying—"Even those who take the elevated road to reach places of worship, will rejoice that the reduction will enable them to increase their contributions when the plate is passed around." One pious woman re-

marked, "If every five cents saved on Sundays through this action of the elevated were placed in the collection plate, the heaviest debts on church edifices would speedily be lifted."

The competing surface lines, however, took a more cynical view of the situation, probably alarmed at the possible loss of business. Mr. W. B. Foshay, president of the Broadway line, cryptically remarked: "This reduction may take some of the passengers from the surface roads who could not afford to pay the ten-cent fare heretofore charged. That is the only way in which the income of the elevated roads will be increased by this action. *Travel on Broadway on Sundays is, however, almost a blank.* We might as well keep our horses in the stable on that day. In the winter it does not pay the elevated to run its trains on Sunday." Imagine!

It was not, however, till the fare was reduced to 5 cents that the real importance of the elevated became apparent. This step was taken, however, only under compulsion. The Legislature decreed it, but Governor Cleveland vetoed the bill on purely legal grounds and came in for much public abuse in consequence. The roads, however, shortly after reduced the fare voluntarily and the success of the new move exceeded all expectations.

Pictures in *Harper's Weekly* in the '80s showing the new elevated trains running up Ninth Avenue above Sixty-sixth Street, also showed potato fields, cabbage patches, and lettuce growing lustily in the foreground on soil that was still being cultivated for food stuffs. It was very much like a scene in Holland. These families evidently came from very rural communities in foreign countries, for they still wore wooden shoes, wide petticoats, and old-fashioned sunbonnets. I have since seen just such people tilling the soil in many parts of Europe. But in the heart of a great city, it was something of a novelty. Their farms extended all the way to Harlem and for a long time enjoyed a lucrative market right at their own door before advancing population drove them from their

quondam possessions. The entire city north of Forty-second Street to Yorkville on the East Side presented a similar aspect. On the West Side it was still more pastoral.

When we kids took an Eighth Avenue car going north of Fifty-ninth Street, the conductors always said "Oh! Keep your nickel, Johnny. It's so good to have a little company up here, it's worth the money!" And no wonder! All around us was a wilderness of crags and boulders. Little wooden shacks peeked out here and there from behind level spaces between the rocks. A long stepladder was needed to reach some of these eerie dwellings. Pigs and children abounded, but the chief inhabitants seemed to be goats. They were everywhere and appeared to thrive on a diet of old theater posters and tin cans. Sometimes they stood motionless for hours on a high promontory outlined against the sky. Their pensive melancholy attitude suggested nothing so much as Macaulay's overworked New Zealander gazing on the ruins of London. Their prophetic vision, perhaps, revealed to their eyes the rapid onslaught of the coming hordes that were to engulf and obliterate the squalid yet romantic section known throughout the city as "Shanty Town," and its inhabitants as "Squatters."

These poor people, mostly Irish immigrants, knew nothing of property rights. Richard Croker's father was one of them. They selected a corner preferably around a rock from someone they knew. A shelter was built out of discarded packing boxes or the lumber refuse of a near-by building. An elbow of disused stove pipe did duty for a chimney. Bushmen or Indians lived no more primitively.

So when the advance of population demanded the reclamation of these lands, many sanguinary conflicts occurred between the officers of the law and these ignorant settlers. This was especially true of the section now embraced in Central Park. Regular sieges were not uncommon, and many a real Mexican revolution was conducted with less bloodshed and fewer fatalities. In the end, of course, law and order tri-

umphed. The development of Central Park then proceeded peacefully, and the East Side section of this strange region extending north from Forty-second Street is now covered by the Grand Central Terminal, Park Avenue, Fifth Avenue above Fifty-ninth Street, the most valuable part of New York, from a real estate point of view, we have. And yet that was the locale of Shanty Town almost up to the '80s.

The Greenwich Street elevated, known for many years as the Gilbert Elevated, was the first attempt at rapid transit and was built originally by Yonkers men to connect with the Hudson River depot at Thirtieth Street and thence to the pleasant village of Yonkers and other Hudson River towns. It was operated by cogwheels. The train started and stopped with the violence of a collision. On the trial trip, one of these sudden stops dislodged the false teeth of President Ackerman and nearly choked him. As the line did not go beyond Thirtieth Street for many years, its success was debatable. Its real service began when it was taken over and extended north on Ninth Avenue to One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street, Harlem. The Third and Sixth Avenue lines were, however, the ones that really gave New York its first genuine rapid transit and their success produced an immediate transmogrification of all uptown New York.

As for roadway traffic, it was immense. Horse-drawn drays, carts, vans and wagons innumerable kept New York below Canal Street in a perpetual "traffic jam." The only visible police control was by the celebrated "Broadway Squad," massive men and handsome, whose functions, however, appeared to be confined to the Chesterfieldian task of escorting timid ladies across the streets on rainy days. A positively dangerous commercial vehicle was the butcher's two-wheeled cart, driven by a reckless diabolic youth in a white apron at a highly dangerous speed. The best pavements the city could boast, even on Fifth Avenue, were of Belgian block, which, under the thousand iron tires moving on it, resounded with

a mighty roar. These pavements, laid under contract with a magnanimous City Government, were soon a series of hills and hummocks, and in the neglected poorer quarters the Irish teamsters had no reason to feel homesick for the "Rocky Road to Dublin."

Everything else we had at this time in the way of transportation, was horse-drawn and moved on wheels. A serious disorder broke out among our equine friends at one time and it spread with amazing rapidity. It was called the epizootic and nearly every animal was affected. Presently the street cars ceased to function or were operated in frightfully reduced numbers. Then the work horses, wagon horses and delivery vehicles of all kind were affected. Transportation of people and goods practically ceased for a short period. The streets were soon filled with hand carts of all kinds resurrected from the time they were our favorite mode of conveyance, and were pushed along the streets by the bosses themselves or any one of their clerks. In an emergency of this kind, everybody lent a hand. Had the epidemic been of a violent nature, the consequences would have been quite serious. It was bad enough as it was. Fortunately, the illness proved rapidly curable and in little more than a month the situation become comfortable again. There were, of course, many deaths, but their loss was speedily made up. While the sickness lasted, however, it showed how dependent the commerce of New York was on its horse-flesh and brought additional support to Henry Bergh's newly formed Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. This organization at first was not accepted seriously and, in fact, was the cause of much hostility on the part of teamsters, drivers and street car conductors. But Mr. Bergh persevered and soon gained respectful hearing for his really commendable and much needed Society. The citizens of this community eventually became very proud of Mr. Bergh, and he left for himself a memory of great and abiding love for dumb animals for whom his great fortune and kindly heart enabled him to

do much. No doubt, the horses had a hard time in those days. For the most part, they were sadly overworked and woefully underfed. There were no drinking troughs to speak of, and the sufferings of the poor animals in summer was really pitiful. Sometimes as many as two hundred a day would perish in an extreme hot wave, especially if it lasted any length of time. Mr. Bergh provided many watering troughs, straw hats to prevent sunstroke and a special ambulance to remove a fallen horse to a place where he could be cared for.

In this motor age we have completely lost sight of the tremendous part played in our daily lives in the past, by our four-footed friends, but it was of great importance and should not be forgotten. It is a delight and a pleasure to recall the courage and humanity of such a fine citizen as Henry Bergh proved to be. It is pleasant to know that in his case his work endures and that the splendid ideals he had have been transmitted and perpetuated by others. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is a rare monument and one of which any man might be proud. But the time had arrived when the reign of the horse was about to end. The city now spread over tremendous distances. It took an hour and a half to go to Harlem if no delays occurred. And they always did. There were incessant demands for something that really provided *rapid* transit. So the city took up the subject and appointed a committee to investigate the question. Meanwhile, the situation remained the same.

But before the Elevated came, and for a year or so afterward, the most important, because the speediest, long-distance communication between Harlem and downtown was undoubtedly the Harlem boats. A line of beautiful white steamers, the *Sylvan Stream*, *Sylvan Glen*, *Sylvan Dell* and *Sylvan Grove* and others were a popular mode of travel between Harlem and downtown New York. They were speedy little craft and on pleasant mornings the sail down the East River was a delightful experience. The boats were crowded morn-

ing and evening. They started at One Hundred and Thirtieth Street and landed at Peck Slip. At the uptown terminus, they connected with the *Emily* and the *Tiger*, which took you to points along the Harlem River, Fordham, Highbridge, Morris Dock, Kingsbridge, Marble Hill, Fort George and Spuyten Duyvil. The combination made a delightful trip. On Sundays they took us to many shaded nooks and pleasant groves along the East River, and their final disappearance left a void which has never found a satisfactory substitute. Starin's Glen Island boats were also very popular.

In the early '70s, there were two familiar figures that always attracted attention as they strolled down Broadway. Both were patriarchs in years and in physical appearance; in fact, they might be chosen as models for what we mentally connote when this word is used. Both wore long flowing white beards covering the upper half of their bodies. They were recognized everywhere. One was Professor S. F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph, and the other was William Cullen Bryant, the poet and editor of the *New York Evening Post*.

Professor Morse was one of the few inventors to live long enough to see his great invention fully developed and to enjoy the fruits of his own labor. This is much better than spending your life in a garret, sustained only by the thought that some day your ship will come in. The ship, however, has often met with so much adverse winds and stormy weather that her arrival is seriously delayed. And when it does put in an appearance, it is greeted, not by the progenitor, but by his heirs and assigns.

As he strode along the street, Professor Morse, despite his eighty-odd years, was a striking figure. He was greeted on all sides by the passing throngs and this kindly homage made the evening of his life very happy. He also lived to see his grateful citizens erect a statue of him in Central Park, as a birthday gift on his eighty-first anniversary. In the evening, he attended an immense birthday party in the old Academy of

Music, then at Fourteenth Street near Third Avenue, arranged by his fellow-citizens, and there received the last public testimonial held in his honor. The weight of increasing years that now showed plainly, warned his colleagues that any honor given to the Father of Telegraphy must not be long delayed. So that night after the speeches and the cutting of the cake, it was arranged that Professor Morse should, as part of the festivities, send a message of greeting to his telegraphic children the world over. This was really a farewell message as everybody knew, but nothing was said of that nature. So space on the table was cleared and a keyboard connected with stations at the uttermost ends of the earth was revealed. Amid an intense silence, Mr. Morse repeated the first message ever sent by telegraph, "What hath God wrought," followed by a simple "Good night" and "Good-bye!" Before many minutes had passed, responses began to come in from everywhere. Hong Kong, Yokohama, Melbourne, Calcutta, Paris, Berlin, London, Chicago, San Francisco, etc., etc. It was a dramatic moment and the spectators were thrilled as they had never been before. Not many weeks after this celebration, as had been dreaded, Professor Morse caught cold, which developed into pneumonia, and he passed away.

So rapid, so marvelous was the development of the telegraph and so venerable was the age at which the inventor died, that he was already a legendary figure to most of the world. It seemed unnatural that the force which devised this monumental instrument should be of human origin; it was so overwhelming in its vastness that it transcended ordinary comprehension. And so the story of his life and his great achievement printed in the daily papers, suggested nothing so much as a tale from the *Arabian Nights*.

Mr. Morse lived on Twenty-second Street not far from Fifth Avenue. A bronze tablet marks the house. In addition to being a member of the faculty of the New York University, then occupying a Gothic building which covered

the east side of Washington Square, he was Professor of the Literature of the Arts of Design, to give him his full title. Besides being a scientist, he was also a painter of no mean repute, some portraits of his now adorning the collections of our Metropolitan Museum of Art.

When he first came to New York, he found the artists and painters divided into camps and with no organization where they could meet and affiliate. He thereupon founded our present National Academy of Design, of which he was President for many years. It is today a flourishing Society and has accomplished much practical work among art students in its more than a century of existence. As his absorption in telegraphy gradually increased, his active association with the Academy was perforce lessened; but his interest in it was maintained to the last.

A very close friend of his and associate in business was Cyrus Field, who lived just a short distance from him on Gramercy Park. It was Field who successfully laid the Atlantic Cable, which at once multiplied the use of telegraphy a hundredfold. Mr. Field lived not far from the home of Peter Cooper, which was at No. 9 Lexington Avenue, and is there today. It was old Peter Cooper to whom we owe much of the success, if not all, of the cable crossing. Long after all the other original subscribers had given the project up as impractical, he stood by his guns and continued to pour money into the "rat hole," as it had become known. When the cable was at last completed and the last mile laid, the final chapter in a series of disappointments occurred and it looked for a moment as if this was final. Within a few miles of shore at Newfoundland, the cable parted and both ends fell into the sea. His friend, Frank B. Allen, happened to be lunching with Mr. Cooper when news of the disaster reached him.

What was needed was an immense quantity of new cable, fresh machinery to handle it and some sort of a vessel that could reach the scene of the accident without loss of time.

Mr. Allen happened to have his handsome steam yacht off the Battery at the time, and kindly offered his host the use of it. No other steam-driven vessel was available along the coast, so Mr. Cooper gladly availed himself of his friend's kindness. In a few hours, the yacht was overhauled, loaded with heavy cables, wrenches, provisions and other paraphernalia. In a short time, she reached the scene of disaster, and with fresh courage the new crew started the exhausting labor of grappling for the lost cable, an almost hopeless undertaking and in fact deemed impossible. Nevertheless, the new equipment proved adequate for the work and to the great surprise of everybody, located the broken strands and brought them on deck. This was doubly valuable as it solved a most important problem, besides rescuing the cable. It provided a method to repair broken strands in the future and removed the final obstacle to the success of transatlantic telegraphing. In a few days, connection with the shore was made and Mr. Field was able to send the first successful cable message to England.

Mr. Morse was able to enjoy the triumph of his friend's success at the great celebration held in New York on completion of the under-sea connection. It was a tremendous occasion and New York had long processions, great dinners and a huge display of fireworks to mark the celebration. The whole of the City Hall was outlined in lamps and flags, and the display of pyrotechnics from this particular building was something on a scale so large and magnificent that it has never been duplicated. Huge Drummond lights—a calcium light presaging our electric light—were perched on the roofs of buildings facing the City Hall and cast their beams in that direction, illuminating the entire Park and City Hall Square.

Mr. Cooper reaped the reward of his indomitable courage, his holdings in the company now known as the Western Union being very large and as a result of his pluck, very valuable. There is, no doubt, that if a less resolute man than Mr. Cooper had been in charge of the venture, the world

would have had to wait a good many years longer for the transatlantic cable after its breakdown at Faraday Bay.

Mr. Field was also richly rewarded for his brilliant part in the enterprise. One of the emoluments that came, not in cash, but in a way that was equally satisfactory, was a warm and intimate friendship with Queen Victoria. This was reckoned by Mr. Field as even more valuable than the fortune he acquired. The two used to correspond in the most intimate and friendly fashion up almost to the day of the old Queen's death. It was a genuine friendship based on mutual liking and esteem.

Just before he died, Cyrus erected a monument to Major André at the spot where he was executed. No doubt, he did this to show his liking for Queen Victoria. From his home in Dobbs Ferry, he could see the white column just across the river at Tappan Zee. The populace of this village, however, could not see it; so they quietly blew it to smithereens and it was never reërected.

Peter Cooper, the last but by no means the least of this telegraphic trio, was probably the most popular citizen New York ever possessed. Up to the day of his death, he drove an old-fashioned buggy with a single horse. It was a good replica of an old country doctor's outfit. Although the traffic jam in New York's streets was always frightful, yet old Mr. Cooper possessed apparently a right of way. It was one of those voluntary things that are so nice to see. Mr. Cooper asked nothing. He was willing to take his turn and wait with the rest when a jam occurred. But everyone made way for our first citizen—teamsters, hucksters, street cars, stages—all made way for old Peter Cooper.

When he died, by common consent all wagons, teams, carts and other vehicles avoided the streets through which his cortege passed—the final tribute by which the drivers of New York could show their respect for the donor of Cooper Union.

Jay Gould was also a prominent figure in telegraph days. As president at one time of the Western Union, he had the honor of declining the bonds of Mr. Bell's Telephone Company, which he might have had at a price very much below par. I once saw the letter declining the offer. It is now in the Historic Museum of the Telephone Company. If I remember rightly, \$75,000 would have been sufficient to secure control of the telephone in New York. Mr. Gould preferred to drive them out of business by lawsuits of various natures, mostly based on supposititious grounds but extremely serious to a company that had difficulty in getting fifteen dollars' worth of printing on credit as was the case at that time. There was a sort of poetic justice in the outcome when the Telephone finally acquired the Western Union.

CHAPTER IX

Men New York Will Never Forget

THE great Centennial had just passed into history when there passed from New York the greatest, the most picturesque figure in some respects that the country had yet produced—Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt. The headlines that announced his death contained also, as the most important fact in his career, the statement that he left a fortune of more than one hundred millions of dollars. That in itself was a prodigious achievement, considering that he started with nothing; but to my mind it was the least of his amazing accomplishments. We owed to the Commodore, the freedom of the seas as it applied to us locally. The stupid patent laws of those early days quietly awarded to Messrs. Livingston and Fulton who perfected the steamboat, but never invented it, a complete monopoly of all the waters on the coast adjacent to the mainland and all the water inland so far as steam navigation was concerned. It was a well-nigh impossible task; for the Livingstons were not only well supplied with money, but practically owned the political world that controlled the law-making power of the country. Had the task fallen to a less resourceful man and a less determined fighter, the monopoly would, no doubt, have persisted many more years. But he was successful, and the freedom of the seas restored to all. He had practically a canal across the Isthmus of Panama before the Suez was built. But for his sudden conversion from water to rail transportation, no doubt his Nicaraguan Canal, operated by steamers but forming almost an unbroken chain from

the Atlantic to the Pacific, would have been built by him as a natural development of the route he had chosen to accommodate the gold rush to California in which he was the pioneer.

He made a present to the Government of a steamer that



Burial of Cornelius Vanderbilt.

cost him eight hundred thousand dollars during the Civil War and at a time when the value of such a gift could not well be reckoned in dollars and cents. For this he received the thanks of Congress. He chose as his second wife a charming Southern belle from Mobile who proved a marvelous companion for this marvelous man. And one result of this union was the gift by the Commodore of a university for higher education to the city of Nashville. This institution has ever since been the recipient of benefactions from the family and is a monument of which the Commodore might be justly proud.

His was a tempestuous, spectacular and intensely palpitating career. He played a prodigious part in the opening of the West, but his activities were felt in every direction. He was a grim fighter and relentless. When he was double-crossed in a certain steamship deal, he realized that long and costly litigation would probably yield nothing, owing to other and wholly unrelated circumstances, and he quietly remarked that he would ruin the company if they did not see fit to treat him justly. Fancying themselves secure, they laughed—and in two years were sold out under the hammer.

In appearance the Commodore looked like nothing so much as an English Archbishop. His impressive size, his silver-gray hair and the parochial white choker which he affected, made him a notable figure on the street. Few men were more widely known or more readily recognized. He was human and had faults. But take him all in all, he was a product of the times, an intense American and a credit to the city in which he was born and which owes to him much of its commercial supremacy today.

Bouck White gives a very picturesque and colorful account of frenzied finance as practiced in those days. The particular incident he describes relates to the famous fight between Drew and Vanderbilt for control of the Erie, the Central's great rival. The Commodore decided the best way to kill the competition was to get control of the former, and he forthwith proceeded to buy at the market all the stock offered. When he had acquired more than a majority, according to the records, he was amazed to find that there was an unlimited supply of stock still being offered on the market. Uncle Drew had simply started a printing press in the back room of the offices of the Erie, then in Pike's old Open House at Twenty-third Street and Eighth Avenue. All day long new stock was coming off the press as fast as the machine could print it.

The rage of the Commodore knew no bounds. Before he

could get an order to seize the outfit, Drew and his cronies decamped in a rowboat to Jersey City, out of the courts' jurisdiction. But they were besieged in Taylor's Hotel. They could not move for fear of kidnaping, for the Commodore had no hesitancy against taking the law into his own hands if he got a chance. Vanderbilt finally concluded to see what could be done by gentler methods and managed to get word to Daniel proposing a meeting. It was no easy matter, as Fisk and Gould had their eyes on Drew all the time. But he finally succeeded. The note read: "Drew: I am sick of the whole damned business. Come and see me. Vanderbilt." It is Drew speaking: "I decided to meet the Commodore's offer of peace, not that I felt any great love toward him. He had been calling me all sorts of names during my stay in Jersey—said I was no better than a batter puddin'; that I would turn tail on my partners any time he wanted me to; that I had no backbone and such-like. And whilst I was starting rumors about him through Wall Street in return for the mean things he was saying about me, he up and said to friends: 'This Erie war has taught me that it never pays to kick a skunk.' It hurt me considerable when these remarks came to my ears. I had half a mind to resent them. But I concluded to forgive him.

"So when Sunday came I set out from the hotel, supposedly for an afternoon's walk. When I was out of sight, I changed my mind and skipped over to New York. I found Vanderbilt at his home in what used to be Potter's field, but was now called Washington Square. It was a fine big house; red brick with white trimmings. I was very cordial in my greetings to him. I thought it best to show a friendly spirit and act as though nothing had come between us. 'How do, Commodore,' said I, and grasped him by the hand, 'the sight of you is good for sore eyes.'

" 'Come in,' said he. He was short as pie crust. I saw those convertible bonds were sticking in his gizzard. But I made up

my mind to keep sweet anyhow, no matter how miffed he might be.

“‘You’ve got a fine house here, Commodore,’ I remarked sitting down in an easy chair and crossing my legs in a friendly sort of a way. ‘It beats all creation how this city is a-growin’. Why, back in my Bull’s Head days this here place where you’ve got your fine house used to be called Shinbone Alley, and the graves around here were thick as bugs on a pumpkin vine. These were great old days anyhow. I often think of the time when you and I were in the steamboat business together.’

“But Van puckered up tighter than chokecherries. ‘Now, see here,’ said he, ‘Let’s don’t get gushy. Of course, I’d like to be affectionate and chat with you about old times. No one knows how my bowels yearn after you, Drew; but as I understand it, this is a business interview, so if you’ll wipe that tobacco juice off your chin and draw up here to the table, we’ll talk.’ So I wiped off my chin and drew up close to the table. We talked the thing over.”

Just then the door opened and in walked Jay Gould and Jim Fisk!

It is a matter of regret that a short biography of the first William H. Vanderbilt has not been written. He was a colorful figure, and some things connected with his career are worth preserving.

Although he was born to great wealth, it was not in evidence during his early years. The Commodore, his father, appeared to have been a Spartan in his idea of what his children should be and decreed for his son William a life as nearly approaching drudgery as the conditions permitted. His early years were devoted to the burglarious attempt to wrest a living from the poverty-stricken soil of the family homestead on Staten Island. He accepted the situation with rare stoicism and set about to do the work at hand industriously and as intelligently as such an occupation demanded. The Commodore in the meantime extended his dominion

in the railroad world, but no word of his immense achievements in the empire of finance ever penetrated the bucolic fastnesses of New Dorp, S. I. One is tempted to believe that William H. was never fooled for a moment. It is not at all unlikely that he wisely concluded that he would play the same part his father did—keep mum. If he was destined to leave a large fortune to someone, he would naturally want to know that that someone was capable of looking after it properly. With this philosophic reflection, he continued to plant cabbages, hoe potatoes and feed insecticide to the numerous pests that seemed fired with an unholy ambition to render all his agricultural achievements null and void.

Having established a reputation for doing small things well, he was soon called upon to enter a larger field and was thereupon installed as bookkeeper in the offices of the Fourth Avenue Street Railway, then a Vanderbilt property. Years of deadly dull grinding followed, but the Dutch grit ingrained in the boy and developed on the farm now stood him in good stead and he endured the monotony of bookkeeping with heroic fortitude. His reward was the growing confidence of the father in the son and his preliminary entrance into the railroad world. Scarcely had he mastered the technical details of his new work than the Commodore died. The entire railroad business together with a huge fortune in cash was bequeathed to the ex-farmer from New Dorp, and William became the head of the family. While there is a law against entail in this country, its main provisions are easily circumvented in the hands of lawyers entirely capable. And the Vanderbilt fortune is in bulk devised to the eldest son. The rest are amply provided for; but where the eldest son sits, there is the head of the table.

True to his early training, Mr. Vanderbilt developed a great fondness for fine horseflesh—a trait which seems to have persisted in the family. There is a monument in England to the memory of the late Alfred G. Vanderbilt who

drove a coach from London to Brighton. He was often seen on the road to Gabe Case's driving a spirited well-matched team, Aldine and Early Rose. But the apple of his eye was Maud S., a beautiful mare behind which Mr. Vanderbilt spent many happy hours. The plot of ground whereon the Biltmore now stands was at that time a vacant lot. It was in there that Maud S. had her private quarters and she could wander at will over the square block that was suitably enclosed with a substantial fence. From his offices in the railroad building across the street, Mr. Vanderbilt's eye could always locate his equine pet. No one was permitted to approach except by special permission, and the grooms saw to it that this rule was strictly enforced. Mr. Schoonmaker, the druggist who kept a store where the old Belmont stood, was one of the few who enjoyed the privilege of giving Maud S. a nice choice apple now and again. Mr. Schoonmaker was quite a character himself and lived to see nearly all his contemporaries pass away. He was everybody's friend.

When occasion moved him, Mr. Vanderbilt could express himself freely and forcibly. In one of the numerous attempts to destroy the Standard Oil Company as a grinding monopoly, the testimony of Mr. Vanderbilt stands out as a specimen of clarity and understanding that few of the men at that trial seemed to comprehend. "They're too smart," he said, "you can't hold 'em down. I've tried it and they licked me every time."

But the remark that occasioned widespread dismay in the offices of the New York Central, was his impassioned reply to a reporter on a train who ventured to remark that the rights of the public should be considered in a certain matter.

"The public be damned!" roared Mr. Vanderbilt.

It took repeated denials and many explanations to finally allay the indignation caused by this remark. An attempt was seriously considered by the Legislature to annul the charter of the railroad company and it was a long time ere the irrita-

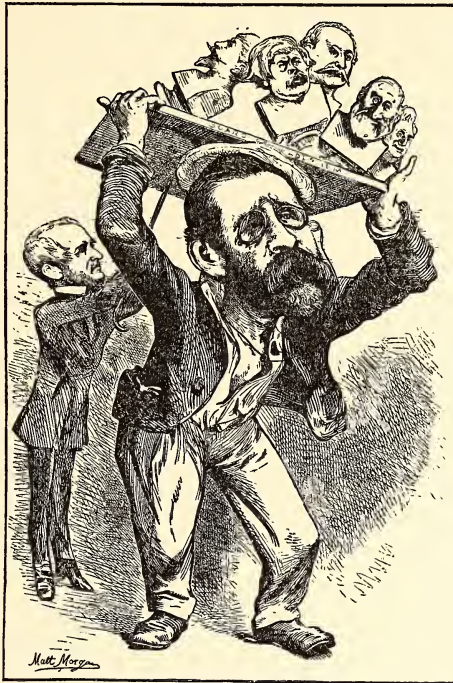
tion subsided. To the end Mr. Vanderbilt insisted that he was misquoted. But for years, the cartoonists lampooned him with this phrase attached to a streamer on his coat tail.

Among the other really interesting and internationally known citizens in New York at that time was, undoubtedly, our genial friend and showman extraordinary, the celebrated showman, P. T. Barnum. For a long time he resided at 437 Fifth Avenue, but a series of reverses induced a less extravagant mode of living, and he retired to Bridgeport, which was a metropolis, to the little town of Bethel in which he was born. His life, however, was mainly spent in New York and the scenes of all his great triumphs were staged here.

A remark attributed to him (but never truthfully), which has to a great extent detracted from what was essentially a truly great character, morally as well as commercially, was to the effect that the public liked to be humbugged. In all his life, no man was ever fairer in his dealings with the public than Barnum. He sometimes resorted to bizarre and spectacular methods to attract attention to his business, but he never took a dollar from a patron that he did not give back a dollar and more in service. Even in his celebrated Cherry-colored Cat episode, the crowds that gathered to see this extraordinary freak of Nature saw so many other things at the same time that the patron received many times the value of the 25 cents he paid to see a cherry-colored cat which he probably could have seen in his own back yard for nothing. For Barnum's cherry-colored cat was black, and he was not to blame because you confidently expected to see a bright red one. True, his museum was so crowded that morning that he had to cut open a door in the rear. He posted signs all over the place reading "This Way to the Egress." The public, thinking this was another natural wonder, hastened toward the door indicated, and presently found themselves in the street, where it cost another quarter to re-enter. But

they had seen more than their money's worth, and crowds were waiting to take their places.

One of his shrewdest moves occurred in connection with a visit of some Indians on the way to see the Great Father. Barnum knew that if he approached them with an offer of



*Mayor A. Oakey Hall having trouble with his
Board of Aldermen.*

money to exhibit themselves, it would be indignantly rejected. So he invited them to be his guests and after taking them around the city in open carriages, to attract as much of a crowd as he could, he drove them to see some of the interesting points about the town. This concluded, he would presently land them on the platform of his Museum, whither the crowd followed to the great gratification of the red man

who fondly imagined that these immense crowds were gathered to do them homage. Mr. Barnum accompanied them to the stage and would make a few remarks concerning each one as he passed down the line. He named each Indian and gave a little sketch of his career and standing in the West. He described this incident to a friend once and seemed to hugely enjoy the recollection.

"In exhibiting these Indian warriors on the stage, I explained to the large audience the names and characteristics of each. When I came to Yellow Bear, I would pat him familiarly upon the shoulder, which always caused him to look up at me with a pleasant smile while he softly stroked down my arm with his right hand. Knowing that he did not understand a word I said, I pretended to be complimenting him to the audience while I was really saying something like this:

" 'This little Indian, ladies and gentlemen, is Yellow Bear, chief of the Kiowas. He has killed, no doubt, scores of settlers and is probably the meanest black-hearted rascal that lives in the Far West.' Here I would pat him on the shoulder and he supposing I was sounding his praises, would smile fawningly upon me and stroke my arm while I continued. 'He ought to be hung to the nearest lamp post. If the bloodthirsty little villain understood what I was saying, he would kill me in a moment. But as he does not understand a word, I am perfectly safe in telling you that he is a lying, treacherous, thieving, murderous monster. He has tortured to death unprotected women, and killed their helpless little ones. He would gladly do the same to you if he thought he could escape punishment. This is but a faint description of Yellow Bear.' Here I gave him another affectionate pat on the head. He would rise and make a pleasant smile, bow to the audience as much as to say, 'This is quite true and I thank you very much.' "

The sad part of the story is that the Indians eventually found out that they were being exhibited as Museum attrac-

tions and not as noted personages, and that the crowds which they had fondly imagined had come to do them honor, were in reality paying customers—and their wrath knew no bounds. So Barnum made himself scarce during the remainder of their visit. Barnum subsequently developed a violent antipathy to the Far West, and never could be induced to travel in that direction even in the serenity of a Pullman.

Toward the close of his life, he always rode in a carriage at the head of the parade, which walked through the streets to proclaim the arrival of the Circus Season. And in his playhouse, Madison Square Garden, he did the same. As a matter of fact, he attracted more attention and gave his patrons more of a thrill by this action, than any of his most expensive features in the procession, and he realized that he was just as much a part of his Show as any other feature. He was immensely popular with all classes.

Barnum's personal life was as clean and inspiring as the most devout could desire. He was many times the victim of adverse fate, but always came up smiling. It was nothing unusual in his early career to find himself hopelessly involved financially. But always he would recuperate and pay all his old debts. Very few men enjoyed such an admirable character for honesty and enterprise. He lived to be eighty-six years of age, and evidently enjoyed every moment to the last. His biography, although vastly amusing, is nevertheless full of lessons in grit and could be read with profit by any young man anxious to get along and make something of his life in a spiritual, as well as a material sense.

The man to whom was first given the title "Merchant Prince" and who richly deserved it, was Alexander Turney Stewart. He is the original Captain of Industry. Coming from Ireland as a boy, he taught school for a while; but having saved up a hundred dollars, he invested it in various items and promptly lost most of his capital. He learned a valuable lesson, however. Instead of buying what he *thought* people

wanted, he began to ask people what *they* wanted. Then he sallied forth to get what he knew he could sell. His acquaintances in Ireland were among the linen drapers and small shops catering to women, and along their lines he opened a small place on Catherine Street, then the leading retail district in town. On Marion Street, Grand, and all around that neighborhood were some of the finest residences in town. Lord & Taylor and Brooks Bros. began in the same neighborhood.

Stewart seemed to possess a second sight. He judged that Catherine Street had already seen its best days and he promptly moved to Broadway between Warren and Murray Streets. He prospered mightily and then bought Washington Hall, a huge building used for balls, public meetings, etc. It occupied the block front on Broadway between Chambers and Reade Streets. There he erected a marble building extending back from Broadway almost 250 feet. It was the eighth wonder of the world in its day. With that rare intuition of his, he suddenly decided that uptown was the coming site for retail trade; and long before any other merchant read the handwriting on the wall, he leased a large plot of ground at a very low rental from Sailors' Snug Harbor covering the block front on Broadway between Ninth and Tenth Streets and extending back to Fourth Avenue. Here he built an iron building of imposing dimensions and had the most convenient accommodations for "carriage trade" of any store in New York. That was on the Ninth Street side, away from Broadway traffic and just the place for skittish horses, of which there were many. He converted the downtown store into his wholesale department.

Perhaps his annual sales in those days would not be impressive compared with some establishments today; but they were said to be in the neighborhood of thirty millions. That, of course, was a staggering sum. There was simply nothing to compare with it in his line. H. B. Claflin probably came

nearest, but his business was in much cheaper goods and he had no retail store. Stewart dealt in only the finest merchan-



Alexander T. Stewart in his retail store, 1876.

dise and his profits were enormous. He functioned also as a credit house. Almost all merchants from out of town dealt with Stewart, and when they opened a new account in another line they always gave Stewart as reference. Office boys

from all the houses were constantly waiting in Stewart's for a "report" just as they did at Bradstreet's or Dun's. If his standing with Stewart was good, he was in line for credit everywhere.

Stewart was very slightly built and not much over five feet in height. Getting off a Fourth Avenue car one day, he grasped the arm of "Billy" Muldoon who happened to be in his way. Looking up he said, "Good gracious! Your arm is as big as my leg." He had a peculiar aversion to photographs and none were ever taken of him. There are one or two pen and ink sketches and an oil painting in the Chamber of Commerce. His features to the general public were unknown when he moved from his store between Murray and Warren to the new marble palace; he transferred also old Mary, an apple woman who had sold apples in front of his store so long that no one remembered to the contrary. Mr. Stewart regarded her his rabbit's foot, his mascot; so when he opened the new Chambers Street edifice, she was there in all her glory at the entrance.

He was very sensitive to noise. When he walked to the rear part of the building where the shipping was carried on, all activity ceased at once. When Mr. Stewart finished the business that brought him there, the racket would start as soon as the signal was given. But no one moved while he was there.

He was extremely soft-spoken. He liked to dabble in real estate as a side line and owned the most important hotel in Saratoga—the Grand Union. This hotel was afterwards to prove a boomerang to his heirs. He also started to build a town on Long Island modeled somewhat after Dublin. He named the place Garden City and built a beautiful Cathedral there, besides many houses. He thought his employees would like to live there. He also built the first hotel for business women. He placed such onerous restrictions around the movements of his guests, particularly where their boy

friends were concerned, that the idea proved a failure. It subsequently became known as the Park Avenue Hotel. It had a beautiful interior court with fountains and shrubbery and enjoyed a long and prosperous career as a commercial hostelry. Only a few years ago it was demolished to make room for an office building. It seems hardly fair to say that this scheme and the Garden City plan were failures. Mr. Stewart died before they were fully developed. How he would have met the situation we do not know, but his marvelous genius for organization would have surmounted the obstacles one way or another as fast as they appeared.

General Grant, recognizing his superb qualities as a financier, offered him a Cabinet position as Secretary of the Treasury. His position as the largest importer made his acceptance possible.

He was one of the early patrons of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I do not now recall that he was distinguished for many public benefactions, though he sent a shipload of provisions to Ireland during the famine of '49. That some generous impulses were stirring within him there is no doubt. His working girls' home as the Park Avenue venture was called, is an evidence of that. But he put it off too long. When he finally did get around to it, he was an old man, and the few remaining years were not enough in which to do the work. He had few friends, the closest being his legal adviser, Judge Henry Hilton. There were rumors at the end that the once brilliant intellect had lost some of its power. When the will was opened, it was found that Judge Hilton came in for a large share of the estate. Mr. Stewart had only a few living relatives, no children, and a wife who was hardly known in society despite their great wealth.

He was buried in the graveyard of old St. Mark's Church on the Bowery. A few weeks later a great sensation was raised when it was found that the body had been stolen. No trace of it was discovered for months, when finally a letter came

from the despoilers of the grave offering to return the body for \$25,000.

His house on Fifth Avenue at the corner of Thirty-fourth Street was set in the middle of a spacious plot on the site of "Sarsaparilla" Townsend's home. It was built of the finest white Carrara marble. Italian artists were imported to decorate the ceilings and the friezes. It was by all odds the showiest and costliest house in town at the time. The papers always respectfully referred to it as a Palace. A pathetic picture was the utter helplessness of Mrs. Stewart left all alone in the big house, wholly unable to handle the great fortune left her. She had failed to grow with her talented spouse. It seemed to be an ill-fated corner. After his death, the house remained vacant for many years. It was finally taken over by the Manhattan Club, but the upkeep was enormous and nearly ruined the Club. So it was finally torn down and a beautiful banking house with half a dozen imposing Corinthian columns forming the Avenue front erected in its place. These columns projected beyond the front stoop line when the edict went forth to widen Fifth Avenue, and they were shorn off. The banking house suddenly got into trouble, which was greatly aggravated by the suicide of its president. Examination of his effects showed the situation not nearly so bad as anticipated. In a short while the securities left by the president greatly appreciated in value, wiping out all liabilities. The suicide act turned out to have been superfluous.

Today the memory of this greatest of Merchant Princes of the Nineteenth Century is preserved merely by the signs on Wanamaker's Stores, stating that this was "formerly A. T. Stewart & Co." They cannot say "successors," as Hilton, Hughes & Co. were the successors. But they made such a failure of the business that Mr. Wanamaker had to start from the ground up, with little of Stewart's prestige to help him. It's merely sentiment that links the two distinguished firms together. Hilton, Hughes & Co., however, did one thing

which will keep their memory green. They imported the first "Horseless Carriage," as they were called in those days. It was the first automobile delivery wagon ever to be used for commercial purpose. It was smart-looking, about the size of a roadster today, with a rather high body. Crowds flocked around it when it came to a stand-still and small boys kept pace with it in motion till they were exhausted.

The Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga, of which I have already spoken, became the property of Judge Hilton as part of the assets of the Stewart estate. The Judge declined to entertain any Jews at that caravansary and the fact was widely published. For once the Jews were in a position to retaliate. They were tremendous factors in the retail dry goods business, and few of them but traded with Stewart. Almost to a man they abandoned Hilton, Hughes & Co. both in the retail and the wholesale departments. Such a defection meant ultimate ruin. The Judge managed to dispose of the business while there was still something left. Hilton went down in history as having accomplished in a few months what few men could have done in a lifetime—dissipated a fortune so colossal, so gigantic, that the achievement must be looked upon as something unearthly. It was a veritable miracle. It was the only monument he left. But in the vernacular of the street, it was a corker.

Of the merchants contemporaneous with Stewart in the dry goods trade, very few survived. Some of the old firm names are still in existence, but the present proprietors are not descendants of the originals nor in any way connected with them by family ties. Owen Winston, principal owner of Brooks Brothers, Stewart's old neighbor on Catherine Street, is descended from F. S. Winston who erected the Mutual Life Insurance Co.; Lord & Taylor is a corporation with none of the stock held by either the descendants of Lord or of Taylor. Jas. A. Hearn & Son and Arnold Constable started on Canal Street and might be called near-neighbors of Stew-

art's. The Hearn family still control that old business, but the Weatherbees, Constables, Arnolds are all out of the present Arnold Constable firm. All the great dry goods jobbing firms that made the dry goods district a region by itself have disappeared. Dunham, Buckley & Co., Kane, Spring, Dale & Co., John F. Plummer & Co., Halstead, Haines & Co., and dozens of others were swept away by the change in methods of doing business whereby the jobber became superfluous and was consequently annihilated.

It was in 1870 that the Standard Oil Co. first came to New York. Their advertised capital of a million dollars made their advent of potential interest. The firms who enjoyed a rating of "G.Aa" in Bradstreet's were not numerous. The Company's first offices were in Pearl Street, running through to Water Street. The building stood just as it was when I saw it recently, and I was shown the little corner room partitioned off by cheap pine board scantling that served as John D.'s private office.

The world waited many years for John D. Rockefeller and it will wait a good many more for his successor. We are so close to this gigantic figure that we do not realize his real height and breadth. The magic touch of distance is needed to bring out his true proportions.

The late J. P. Morgan was another giant of a figure. I remember his telling me he was a descendant of Henry Morgan the pirate. "The main difference was," he said with just the faintest shadow of a smile, "that he was a buccaneer at sea while I have been a buccaneer on land."

At the period of which I write, Mr. Rockefeller was regarded with much less kindly feelings on the part of the public, than even Henry Morgan was, and that attitude persisted for many years. And in his contempt for *hoi polloi* he could give cards and spades to William H. Vanderbilt. A preacher out West leaped at once into fame by declining a gift from Mr. Rockefeller, declaring it to be "tainted money."

This phrase crept into popular use and many were the jokes bandied back and forth regarding "tainted" money.

No doubt these were tough times in the oil industry. The very nature of the business was not calculated to breed a crop of house cats. They were also descendants of a hardy lot. Up to the time of the discovery of oil in Pennsylvania, our entire supply of this valuable commodity was obtained from the denizens of the vasty deep. And one of the first men who joined Mr. Rockefeller was Josiah Macy, who at the time was still actively engaged in whale fishing at Nantucket. Not a few mementoes of the Macy family are preserved in the little Historical Museum on that Island, and Col. Chas. H. Taylor of the *Boston Globe* is the proud possessor of a log book in the handwriting of Wm. H. Macy, father of Josiah, who made a cruise around the world when he was fourteen years old. One of the entries speaks entertainingly of seeing some young ladies from England when they put in one day at Whampoo. The sight of so much female loveliness, after staring at the sea and sky for nearly two years, produced a profound impression upon the susceptible young sailor boy. This Macy became president of our first free school, from which has developed our present magnificent Public School System. The late V. Everit Macy of Westchester County is a grandson; W. Kingsland Macy and J. Noel Macy, both engaged in public service, the latter as a newspaper publisher, are of the same family. All are well known in New York.

It is probable that Mr. Rockefeller's chief fame will rest upon his surpassing ability as an organizer in the business world, but in the spiritual world it will doubtless rest on his gigantic benefactions and his never-ending philanthropy. All figures in this connection are so stupendous as to be beyond credibility. But the world no longer doubts.

As a fighter John D. was a marvel. When his company was declared a monopoly in the State of Ohio and forbidden to do further business in that State, Mr. Rockefeller inquired

of his associates what lawyer it was that had given the Standard such an unmerciful licking. "Frank B. Kellogg, Attorney General of Ohio," was the answer. "Well," said Mr. Rockefeller quietly, "so much good talent should not go unrecognized. Engage him as our chief counsel and appeal everything."

Ida M. Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens, and a host of "muck-rakers," as they were called, made a fat living from magazine articles, newspaper columns, etc., for a while, abusing Mr. Rockefeller and nearly everybody else who had been unusually successful. Through it all, Mr. Rockefeller maintained absolute silence. When the news reached him that Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis had fined the Company twenty-nine million dollars, Mr. Rockefeller was playing golf. "Well," he remarked gripping his club a little more firmly, "let him go get it."

He never did. Merritt Starr, who died in Chicago only last year, saw to that. Judge Landis forsook the bench and took up baseball where his decisions can't be appealed.

Since 1870 the capital of the Standard Oil Co. has been slightly increased. In response to Teddy Roosevelt's demand for the control and the punishment of malefactors of great wealth, the Standard Oil Company was ordered dissolved, the practical effect of which was to increase the wealth of this corporation to a sum beyond the dreams of avarice.

Mr. Rockefeller is now very much in the position of a man walking on a railroad trestle who has just heard the whistle of an approaching express. It's hard work, hopping from tie to tie, but it must be done to escape the onrushing monster. His money piles up so fast that he has almost as many people engaged in spending the surplus as he has in making it, and they have hard work to keep ahead of the locomotive.

All in all, Mr. Rockefeller and his money have been a huge blessing instead of a curse. As one of America's products, he

will ever remain unique. His last birthday spent at his home in Pocantico Hills, to reach which you must cross the bridge made famous by Washington Irving's Headless Horseman, brings him close to the century mark. He is not much of an eater, and they say you could board him for \$5 a week and make money, even with milk at 31 cents a quart, which is his principal diet. Here's hoping he'll round out the century.

About this time, in a rather depressing building on Pearl Street, another "crank" was working on an impossible idea. His name was Edison, and he was telling folks that he was going to provide them with a light that needed no matches, would have no odor or heat and could not be blown out. You can imagine the cordial encouragement given in those days to such a brainless idea as that. Presently, however, the office of the *New York Times*, then at the junction of Park Row, Nassau and Spruce Streets, and Morgan's banking house were equipped with the new-fangled light. To the surprise of everybody, the unexpected happened; the new illuminant was a great success and the incandescent light took its place among the inventions which were among the first to mark the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century in New York as the most fruitful period in the history of mankind.

Mr. Edison was another of the fortunate few to enjoy the fruits of his labor while in the flesh. The Golden Jubilee of lighting was a celebration that will long be remembered by the present generation. Singularly enough, Mr. Edison was on record as condemning many developments in the electric field that other men proved practical. He had no use for electric power in the beginning and told his friend Sprague that he was wasting time trying to make street cars and elevators function by electric power. Yet Sprague did both of these things. As for the phonograph, he never regarded the invention seriously nor worth any particular effort as a means of entertainment or utility. It was to be a whim—a passing toy.

He once engraved the Lord's Prayer on a dime for Ed-

ward Bok of the *Ladies' Home Journal*. He invented many useful devices and was credited with a vast number with which he had nothing to do. There was not another instance in all history where a man had so whole-heartedly been given the sole credit for every invention in a great industry, regardless of the real inventor, as in Edison's case. Yet I think he did not do this himself; it had been forced upon him in a large measure by the bankers who knew that the name of Edison made paper certificates into real money and who promptly bought up every new invention and promptly put it in the hopper labeled "Edison." So it is not fair to charge him with this apparent injustice. Of the vast number of persons engaged in the electrical industry in this country, it would not be an exaggeration to say that less than one per cent ever heard of the name of Faraday. But another important thing should go to his credit—and it is most important. It was Thomas who told Henry that he was on the right track with his idea of a gas combustion engine for an automobile, while the others were working on steam.

CHAPTER X

Old-Time Dinners and Speakers

AFTER-DINNER speaking was held in high esteem in those days. I have never been able to ascertain exactly why mankind has an urge for eloquence after eating. In my school, a young classmate of mine who was asked to define elocution said it was a thing that people were killed with in some States. He was not far wrong. A certain irascible toastmaster I knew was deeply chagrined at the lack of attention paid to one of his speakers and rapped loudly for order. The first admonition not having the desired effect, he essayed a second effort; but this time the gavel flew off the handle, temporarily stunning the guest on whose head it had alighted. In a few moments the member recovered his senses, evidently to his regret, as he called out loudly: "Hit me again. I can still hear him talking!"

Some of these dinners had a peculiar and useful function to perform. They were used by those high in Government positions to sound out public opinion on important measures before putting them into effect. A member of the Cabinet would attend and his speech was understood to represent the Administration's attitude on a certain problem. If his speech was well received throughout the country, the White House would know how to proceed. If the comments were unmistakably hostile, the project would be deferred or modified in the direction where the criticism was most severe. The annual dinner of the Chamber of Commerce was the scene of these governmental gestures, but sometimes the Union

League would be selected. It doubtless followed an established English custom, where a banquet at the Mansion House in London following the election of a new Lord Mayor was utilized by the British Government for a similar purpose.

On two occasions, these public dinners were the scenes of most dramatic and tragic happenings. Secretary Windom in Garfield's Cabinet was in the midst of an absorbing statement regarding the financial policy of the Government, when he suddenly paused. A second later, he slumped forward and was, with difficulty, saved from falling to the floor. He expired in a few seconds from a heart attack induced, no doubt, by the excitement of the evening.

Another similar case was that of Frederick A. Schermerhorn, a well-known old New Yorker, and president of the Union League Club. The occasion was a reception of officers, and men back from the War with Spain. While pointing to our National Emblem, in this instance of extraordinary size and beauty, behind the speaker's chair, he too was seen to falter and stop. He sank into his chair, his eyes still resting on Old Glory to which he had pointed, and thus looking up, he expired.

In addition to these public dinners, oratory was also still in great popular favor with the proletariat. To a large extent, huge mass meetings and indoor gatherings were our only method of reaching the electorate in large numbers. Newspapers reported only those speeches of national concern, and local issues were neglected. So there grew up a body known as "spell-binders," who were employed mainly by the great political parties to make stump speeches for them during election time.

But it was at the semi-private dinners that oratory bloomed in most riotous profusion. St. Andrew's Day, St. George's Day, St. Patrick's Day and a dozen other noteworthy occasions were annually commemorated, but the New England

contingent easily took the palm for post-prandial oratory. The Landing of Our Forefathers was always joyfully observed and the best speakers were usually found at their banquets. And their speeches were prepared without the priceless assistance afforded these days by textbooks in "How to Become a Public Speaker," "How to Address a Board of Directors," etc.

The Pilgrims, these hardy perennials, were the object of much laudatory commendation every December, and the striking contrast between the lives of the heroes these dinners celebrated, and their frost-bitten, poverty-stricken descendants, holding forth in such abject, pitiful surroundings as Delmonico's or Sherry's exhibited, was the subject of much ribald jest on the part of the speakers on those occasions. The speeches as a rule were of a high literary character, interspersed with much delicious humor. Mr. Beecher, Mr. Choate, Mr. Bromley, Mark Twain, George William Curtis, James M. Beck, Chauncey M. Depew, shone with special luster at these particular gatherings. All being New Englanders, their mock commiseration for the rest of the populace who were denied the privilege of enjoying this particular mark of Divine approbation, were classic in their conception, and outrageously humorous in their application. To this day the toast of Mr. Choate is still remembered. "I give you," he said, "The Pilgrim Mothers: they had to live with the Pilgrim Fathers." It was a long time ere the laughter provoked by this sally was forgotten.

Mr. Beecher's speeches were marvels of learning, logic and humor. His presence at a banquet reconciled the diners to the tedious platitudes of the average speaker, generally half frightened to death by the imposing grandeur of his surroundings and painfully aware of the fact that he was making an ass of himself. He and Mr. Choate were generally reserved to the last. In this way the attendance was held together till the closing moments.

Mr. Beecher at one time referred to the fact that he was often credited with having written *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but through brotherly love on his part had allowed his sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, to get the credit for it. "I have denied this story for years," said the reverend doctor, "with no result. Finally I wrote *Norwood*—(referring to a novel of his own which was a dismal failure) and that settled the question forever!"

Another toast, "Connecticut's Part in the Business," was responded to by Mr. Isaac H. Bromley, a former editor of the *Tribune* and a native of the Nutmeg State. It was one of the most illuminating pages on the development of our country that was ever transcribed. For once the people learned that Connecticut, and not Massachusetts, created the division between Church and State, and wrote a constitution for herself in 1639, which for the first time proclaimed a government for the people, of the people, and by the people on this Continent. It is a matter of deep regret that many of these speeches—the result of profound research and careful study—should have been committed to the fugitive pages of a daily paper.

Mark Twain delivered his celebrated New England weather speech at one of these dinners, which has ever since remained a classic on this bewildering subject.

Frederick R. Coudert, one of New York's greatest lawyers in his day, spoke on "New York." Mr. Coudert was evidently a close and accurate student of history as he promptly proceeded to denude New England of all her hard-earned reputation and glory as the only section with any considerable decent record of pre-Revolutionary activities. When he finished, the New Englanders were left gasping like their native cod. "It was New York who first emptied tea into the harbor; not in a dramatic way disguised as Indians and with a moonlit night. No; our practical fathers manifested their objection to the odious tea by quietly moving it into the stream

in the broad light of day, in the ordinary accoutrements of business men, and there dumped it into the harbor with as little ceremony or concealment as our own people of today dump other and more objectionable material into the same waters. (Laughter.) It will be some satisfaction to remember, if our noble harbor is ever choked up by these repeated invasions, that the foundation was laid with expensive material and patriotic purpose."

At about the same time Roscoe Conkling uttered a single sentence that was more illuminating than a whole volume, regarding the development of New York. He said: "*In the lifetime of men still living*, in three-quarters of this State, untrodden and trackless forests, unknown lakes and rivers and undiscovered fields and mines, were wrapt in solitudes where now temples of learning and temples of mammon, outglitter each other in the splendor of a wondrous civilization."

At one of these New England dinners—a never-to-be forgotten occasion, Henry W. Grady, a totally unknown figure in New York, came up from Atlanta, Ga., where he was editor of a famous Southern paper, *The Constitution*. Mr. Grady spoke on "The New South," thrilling and electrifying his audience as it had rarely been thrilled before. Next morning his address appeared in all the papers, and created as much excitement and pleasure throughout the Nation as it had at the dinner. Mr. Grady enjoyed to the utmost the sensation of going to bed unknown and unsung, to find himself the next morning among the superlatively famous. To the profound sorrow of the entire Nation, Mr. Grady soon after passed away suddenly at the very threshold of life, and the South lost a friend she could ill afford to spare. He was still in his early thirties.

Mr. Grady's oration was somewhat inspired by the remarks made by Mr. Roscoe Conkling at another banquet,

which was at once an invitation and an admonition to the South.

"The South cannot sit in the ashes of a fire kindled by herself and not enfeeble every Northern State. The South cannot grope in the desolation of shattered institutions, without unbalancing the healthful forces of all the Nation. When she can see this and feel this and know that every patriot in the land longs for her resurrection, longs for the time when in all her borders the Constitution and laws and right and order and peace and common sense shall reign, then if she can rule her own spirit, her wealth will be our wealth, her welfare, our welfare." (Applause.)

Memories of the Civil War were still acute, and the heroic survivors in that conflict who had gained distinction were vociferously greeted on their appearance at these dinners. An incident that always provoked great merriment was that concerning the Burgess of Gettysburg who, before that great battle was fought, and while the huge armies were maneuvering for position, formally notified the Commander of the Union forces, General Meade, and the Commander of the Confederate Army, General Robert E. Lee, that it was against the ordinances of the town to discharge firearms within the limits of the village. His warning went unheeded and the great Battle of Gettysburg passed into history.

An old war horse that created immense enthusiasm whenever he appeared, was General John A. Dix. When he was a guest at a banquet, he was always asked to respond to "Our Flag." The toastmaster started his introduction in the usual orthodox manner, but before ending, managed to make a gradual and impressive approach to the one big thought in his mind, the moment when Dix telegraphed his famous order regarding the flag that floated over the Federal buildings in New Orleans, and which the mob threatened to remove: "If any man attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot."

The moment he reached that point a tremendous demonstration ensued. Three cheers were instantly given for General Dix. All present would rise, making the banquet hall ring with their thunderous applause. The band meanwhile would play the "Star-Spangled Banner." Nobody would sing it, but everybody would be having a perfectly gorgeous time. There were always lots of cheering and handclapping at all public dinners, but this "shoot him on the spot" toast invariably got a reception that completely dwarfed everything else in that line.

At all these great dinners, General Grant was almost always an honored guest. It is difficult for the present generation to understand the tremendous popularity of the great Union leader. He lived on Sixty-third Street and was easily the First Citizen of the land. Unfortunately, he was utterly unable to do a single thing in the way of public speaking, and might many times have passed unnoticed, were it not that the bands always played "Lo! the Conquering Hero Comes" every time he made his appearance. He was also said to be tone deaf as far as music was concerned. As a matter of fact, the only tune he ever heard anywhere was the one I have just mentioned; and as that was played by all manner of bands and by all kinds of instruments, it is no wonder that he never knew exactly what the musicians had in mind.

Another great public favorite was General Sherman. He lived on Seventy-second Street and was an inveterate first nighter at the leading theaters. Wherever he appeared, the bands struck up "Marching Through Georgia," so he in time came to believe that bands knew only one tune, also. At all events, these two tunes came to mean that a moment later you would see either Sherman or Grant. New York was very fond of her eminent soldier-citizens and lost no opportunity of testifying her affection for them.

General Sherman greatly enjoyed his life in New York. The public and private demonstrations in his honor, his de-

light in the theater, the many banquets at which he spoke and where he was always warmly welcomed, and a thousand and one other pleasant incidents, made his stay here one of unusual enjoyment. He kissed innumerable pretty girls and enjoyed it. He was a familiar figure in our uptown streets and was greeted affectionately by rich and poor alike on his daily constitutional. Sherman Square was named in his honor. He found much in New York to recompense him for the tribulations of his march from Atlanta to the Sea. When he was finally called to his fathers, a picturesque and likable figure passed from New York. His great antagonist at the end of his final Eastern Campaign, Joe Johnston, caught his death by standing with his hat off on a cold February day when Sherman was being carried to his grave.

The old-time public dinner was friendly and intimate. It bore no relation to the prodigious affairs today at which the speaker has a hook-up so that all the world and his wife may listen in.

So at these dinners, the City of New York received unaccustomed compliments. Our town was enthusiastically maligned and excoriated three hundred and sixty-four days in the year by our neighbors; but on Forefathers' Day they were polite enough to reserve that one day on which to pat us on the back and tell us how really fine we were, after all.

Such sentiments so transcended the abuse to which we were accustomed, and were so unusual in our experience, that we could not feel it in our hearts to complain. These fleeting moments, during which we basked in the comforting warmth of self-appreciation, were alas only too few. The ink was hardly dry on the paper which carried these encomiums, ere the habitual baiting began again. We have now happily grown so great that no one takes the trouble to revile us, and peace has been attained upon the ground that "New York is well enough to visit, but for all-the-year-around-living

give me Belgrauve-Manor-on-the-hill." And everyone is satisfied.

Among the orators whose best work was not at these semi-public dinners but at great political conventions and on the stump for the candidates, Col. Robert G. Ingersoll probably ranked as high as any. It was he who bestowed upon Blaine the grandiloquent title of "The Plumed Knight—our Henry of Navarre." The effect of this broadside was to sweep the Cincinnati Convention off its feet for Blaine, probably because the delegates had never heard of Henry and thought a Plumed Knight was a new brand of eatin' tobacco.

Colonel Ingersoll was also an agnostic, something terrible in those days, and went up and down the county with a lecture entitled "The Mistakes of Moses," in which he poked merciless fun at everything sacred and holy to the average person. He managed to steer a rather safe course, however, by admitting that he did not believe that dead babies necessarily became kindling wood for Hell. Few persons found it difficult to agree with him on this point. His impromptu (?) speeches cost him many nights of travail and much burning of the midnight oil. He was extremely chary of extemporaneous speeches and was never known to make one in his life.

He enjoyed an enormous reputation as a literary genius among his admirers, and the following specimen of his accomplishments in this direction is worth perusal. It was a letter which he sent to a friend along with a bottle of whisky. This letter found wide circulation in the newspapers and magazines of the day and was hailed by Colonel Ingersoll's admirers as the very last word in eloquent and classical English. Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech, Portia's Plea for Mercy, and Mark Antony's oration over the bier of Caesar were considered mere Mother Goose rhymes compared to the overwhelming beauty of Bob's panegyric over a bottle of cheap moonshine. Ministers denounced it from the pulpit,

bewailing the fact that its seductive literary charm made it all the more devilish. As an excellent illustration of Nineteenth Century literary tosh, it still occupies a high place in the affections of the old-time scrapbook. It is worth the space of reproduction as a curiosity in literature, if nothing else.

My dear Friend:

I send you some of the most wonderful whiskey that ever drove the skeleton from a feast of painted landscapes in the brain of man. It is the mingled soul of wheat and corn. In it you will find the sunshine and the shadow that chased each other over the billowy fields, the breath of June, the carol of the lark, the dews of night, the wealth of summer and autumn's rich content, all goldened with imprisoned light. Drink it and you will hear the voices of maidens singing the "Harvest Home," mingled with the laughter of children. Drink it and you will feel within your blood the starlit dawns, the dreamy tawny dusks of many perfect days. For forty years this liquid joy has been within the happy staves of oak, longing to touch the lips of man.

R. G. Ingersoll

He chose Sunday night as one of the chief evenings for his lectures and managed to secure quite an attendance. He charged a dollar admission, which was something unusual for a religious performance, but many people went. Much of his talk was apt to give the pious an impression that Colonel Ingersoll was a derelict himself, which was exactly the opposite of the truth. He was personally a fine man and neighbor of mine for many years, and I got to know him very well. Being an agnostic, however, put him without the pale in the good opinion of many persons. He died in Gramercy Park. A hotel now occupies the site of his home and a brass tablet on the wall of the hotel records his residence there.

Along with the dinner and political oratory, I should also include pulpit oratory. With possibly a few exceptions, the art of pulpit oratory does not exist today as it did in the time

of which I speak. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick and Dr. S. Parkes Cadman seem to be about the only prominent exponents of this delightful art that come to my mind readily, though no doubt there are many others.

Pulpit oratory arose to its highest pitch in Brooklyn, largely because it was the home of perhaps the greatest orator this country has ever known—Henry Ward Beecher. Strangers could easily locate Plymouth Church by the crowds that flocked there from all directions.

At the time of which I write, Brooklyn Heights was more accessible as a residential section for business men having their offices below Fulton Street, than uptown, and this was especially true of the financial district. So the Heights were in a very intimate sense a part of New York. It was a delightful residential section and boasted of many homes which for size and elegance had no counterpart as yet in New York. Its elevated position, its stately old trees, its beautiful outlook on the ever-moving marine panorama of the Bay, made it a charming region. Hundreds of New Yorkers now living on Park Avenue opposite Central Park, first saw the light of Heaven from Brooklyn Heights. It was not till the Elevated came, that uptown New York began to blossom out with handsome residences. When the East River Bridge, as it was called, was finally opened, the glory of the Heights departed forever. Easy and cheap communication with New York brought the common herd to Brooklyn in swarms and millions, and that part of old New York as we knew it, passed into oblivion.

So the congregations of many Brooklyn churches were made up of New Yorkers. And in similar fashion Old Trinity was equally popular with many Brooklynites who liked to cross the river on Sunday mornings and hear Dr. Dix or Bishop Potter in the venerable edifice at the head of Wall Street. So when I speak of Brooklyn churches, I am really within the purlieu of New York.

Mr. Beecher's church was of Puritan simplicity as to its furnishing, but excellently arranged for the huge crowds that made their appearance each Sunday. Every nook and cranny was occupied, and the aisles had extra folding chairs attached to the pews. The rear and the walls were lined with standees and even the steps leading to the pulpit were occupied. There were no loud-speakers in those days, so you can imagine the power of a voice that could make itself distinctly heard by everyone in that vast audience. The rustling of the leaves, as the congregation turned to find the place in the hymnbook, was as the sound of many waters, and the singing of "Abide With Me" or "Rock of Ages" was an experience never to be forgotten. As for the sermon itself, I cannot begin to describe it adequately. Ever and anon his voice would sink to a whisper and suddenly sound forth with a boom that shook the rafters. At the most unexpected moments, a bright shaft of wit would convulse his hearers, to be followed by a beautiful thought that would be remembered for weeks.

As a political stump speaker he was matchless. The election of Grover Cleveland as President was in a great measure due to Beecher. His church, being stanchly Republican, was naturally much cast down, and resentment ran high. I was there the morning Mr. Beecher took cognizance of this fact.

"I am told," he began in that matchless voice of his, "I am told that my days of usefulness to Plymouth Church are over and that the income of the church is now greatly reduced and you can no longer afford to keep me. Let us reduce the salary, but do not send me away. I came to you as a young man from Lawrenceburg, Indiana, now almost fifty years ago. I have been with you ever since. You and I have seen old Plymouth grow strong in the sight of the Lord, and in my old age you must not send me away. I came to you for fifteen hundred dollars a year and I can still live on that, but don't send me away from old Plymouth!"

By this time the entire congregation was in tears and with every reference to his going away Beecher made no effort to conceal the grief that was his. The tears coursed down his venerable cheeks. It was a moving incident in the history of that old church and was long remembered in Brooklyn and one I shall never forget.

What had happened was this. During the Cleveland-Blaine campaign, Cleveland was accused of grave moral misconduct. The charge was baseless, but Cleveland declined to enter into a discussion of the matter beyond a laconic telegram to a friend saying, "Tell the Truth."

To those on the inside it was known that Mr. Cleveland immediately visited Mr. Beecher and at a secret meeting with his friends and Mr. Beecher's friends, explained the entire situation. For reasons equally satisfactory to Mr. Beecher and his friends, this explanation could not be made public. Beecher in characteristic fashion having thus been satisfied, promptly proceeded with his campaign regardless of criticism and knowing the real truth, Beecher became exasperated beyond measure at the repeated charges of immorality and in an unguarded moment thundered out, "If every man who had violated the seventh commandment was to vote for Cleveland, he would be almost unanimously elected!" This unfortunate remark was, of course, widely exploited by his opponents. No doubt, it was deeply regretted by Beecher a moment later. But the exigencies of a heated campaign, the anger caused by the unwarranted assumption of a guilt that never existed, were a severe strain on a high-strung temperament such as Beecher's. However, the damage was done. It was suppressed as much as possible, but a remark like that could not be ignored, and it remained to plague Beecher for many a long year. This particular campaign was unusual for its personal vilification and abuse on the part of Blaine's partisans, nor were Cleveland's friends much less blamable. The entire country experienced a feeling of deep disgust and

gave a great sigh of relief when it was over. It produced one good and lasting effect: every subsequent campaign was conducted on a much higher plane; and vileness and slander disappeared from political discussions. In this respect, it was a blessing in disguise.

The Rev. Richard S. Storrs was another mighty force in the church life of that day. There were so many sacred edifices in Brooklyn at that time that she was called the City of Churches. The Reverend T. de Witt Talmage was also immensely popular. His pulpit manners were the absolute antithesis of Beecher and Storrs, and much fun was poked at the curious antics he performed during his discourse. He also had immense congregations. The singing was led by a cornetist, but the organ played by Mr. George W. Morgan was famous all over the country. The list of divines in Brooklyn at that time was long and distinguished and many will recall Drs. Storrs, Behrends, Darlington, Eggleston, Wells, Gunnison, Hall, and many others.

The Rev. Dr. Chapin of the Universalist faith in New York enjoyed great popularity, as did Dr. Robert S. Collyer, known as the blacksmith minister—having graduated from that humble occupation to become head of the Church of the Redeemer at Thirty-fourth Street and Park Avenue, one of the most prominent churches in New York. The Rev. Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church also attained eminence, but of a sizzling sensational kind. Vice and its attendants were rampant in the town. Disorderly resorts, gambling houses, policy and pool rooms flourished openly. Juries refused to punish criminals except on eyewitness testimony. Dr. Parkhurst and his friends, cleverly disguised, made the rounds of numerous bawdy houses and Dr. Parkhurst related in unvarnished detail just what he had seen, where it occurred, gave names and addresses and supplied the Grand Jury with evidence which they could not ignore. The result of his disclosures was a special legis-

lative committee to investigate every department of the City's activities, and Tammany as usual came in for excoriation. This Lexow Committee brought to light some strange



Cardinal McCloskey, 1884.

fish, and New York had its first taste of what was then a novelty—the underworld of the City. All the secrets of the criminal classes, their haunts and methods of living were laid bare before this Commission and it made sensational reading

for many months. Dr. Parkhurst was a practical reformer and a distinguished example of the church militant.

The Roman Catholic Church was prospering amazingly under the Archbishoprics of Farley and Hughes. The importance of the Catholic Church, which less than seventy years before had only one church and two priests to minister to the spiritual needs of its followers, had now grown to enormous dimensions and in its magnificent Cathedral in Fifth Avenue owned the most costly and imposing church edifice in America. In a few years, the archbishops were exalted to Cardinals—Bishop Farley becoming the first Cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church in New York.

The Jews were also increasing in power and influence. They had always been an important factor in the religious life since the opening of the first place of public worship in William Street while New York was still New Amsterdam. Their principal synagogue was the Temple Emanu-El then on Fifth Avenue, corner Forty-third Street, though they had many smaller but vigorous branches all over the city.

In addition to this church life, we had also a great religious awakening all over the country, caused by the revival meetings of Moody and Sankey, a pair of evangelists who created great interest and excitement in religion. They traveled all over the country, spending a week in a city. Great crowds gathered everywhere to hear them, and thousands were turned away nightly. They always had the largest auditorium in town, usually the Armory, and it was packed to the doors. Mr. Moody was an earnest, forcible speaker, and his very earnestness made up for whatever else he lacked in pulpit attractiveness. It is said that he knew every word in the Bible and could give verse and chapter for every possible quotation.

In Mr. Sankey, a singer of unusual sweetness, he had a valuable assistant. I have heard Mr. Sankey sing such a simple hymn as "Where is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" in a

manner that brought tears to the eyes of his listeners. By and by they collected their hymns into a volume, which was known as the Moody & Sankey Hymn Book. It contained such stand-bys as "Hold the Fort, for I am Coming," "Stand up for Jesus," "Ninety and Nine," "Pull for the Shore," and a hundred others that are familiar today to most of my readers. As a result of his work, Mr. Moody was able to establish a school in Northfield, Massachusetts, for religious instruction.

Always after a great war there is a spiritual awakening among the people and the consolations of religion are eagerly sought. Sometimes it is ten or a dozen years after the event. Moody and Sankey were the aftermath of our Civil War. Before that time, religious Camp Meetings sprang up all over the country in response to the same demand. Sing Sing on the Hudson, Sea Cliff on Long Island, Ocean Grove in New Jersey, Martha's Vineyard, and countless other now popular summer resorts got their start in that way. They flourished for many years. All through the summer, crowds used to throng the headquarters of the Methodists where they had a Temple at Ocean Grove capable of seating ten thousand persons. Eminent divines of that persuasion were heard in that resort. I was there one season at the final meeting of that year. The thousands within the Temple were joined by other thousands who were gathered outside on the beach. Hymn singing was the principal feature of the services, so the crowd on the beach missed little of what was going on inside.

The last hymn was "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." The effect of this beautiful hymn, together with its appropriateness at the moment, was very emotional. I imagine more than twenty thousand voices were raised that moonlight night in singing this hymn and the effect was strangely moving. There was no doubt that everyone there was deeply touched by its power and pathos. It was a great experience.

These camp meeting people were devout in their way, but were only human after all. A young man who applied for enlistment in the Army, could not give his father's name. " 'Spect I'se just one of these Camp Meeting babies," he ex-



*Rev. Charles F. Deems, D.D., pastor of the Church
of the Strangers, 1876.*

plained to the sergeant. John Hay says Lincoln told him that story during the Civil War.

There were many eminent divines who were so often in New York that they became one of us, in a measure, and Bishop Brooks of Massachusetts was one of them. He was so much thought of everywhere that he belonged to the country

at large and not to any one town. His church in Boston, architecturally one of Richardson's masterpieces, was the Mecca for pilgrims from all parts of the land. With sparkling humor and a rare gift of eloquence, he was a shining mark in Episcopal circles. He was the idol of the Hub, and his sermons were delightful. I presume there is not a Christian community in the universe that does not sing this beautiful hymn of his on Christmas Eve:

O little town of Bethlehem!
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

As a beautiful tribute to the memory of Phillips Brooks, the choristers of his old Boston Church, Trinity, sing this hymn every Christmas Eve as their leading carol.

It is probably one of the most exquisite possessions in the realm of sacred music, and church life the world over is richer for it. When this rare spirit passed on, he left a void which has never been filled. His was a singularly beautiful and gracious soul.

His colleague in New York, the Rev. Dr. Henry C. Potter, Bishop of the Diocese and pastor of old Trinity, was almost more popular and more erudite, if such a thing could be. As an after-dinner speaker, Bishop Potter was a tremendous success, and where he presided as toastmaster, the table was kept in gales of laughter.

There were few more genial companions than Bishop Potter in any gathering, and he was a more than welcome guest at any function which he found time to attend. I remember being at a dinner given in honor of Barrie (not Sir James,

at that time), but just a budding author, yet already recognized as a coming figure in English literature. His publisher, the late Charles Scribner, was with him. Included in the company was also Conan Doyle, whose "Sherlock Holmes" was making his first bow to the American public. It was fortunately a small gathering, in the old Aldine Club, where everyone knew everyone else, when it was still in Lafayette Place, the home of its origin. The Bishop was toastmaster, and his wit and repartee made the evening a delightful one. No one, I think, ever had a happier faculty of placing a speaker at ease with his audience or launching him on his speech with greater confidence.

It was under Bishop Potter's guidance that the first steps were taken toward the erection of the present magnificent Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Cathedral Heights. He lived long enough to see this mighty undertaking successfully launched. His was a useful and valuable life to New York, which he deeply loved and which loved him devotedly in return.

Reading over these notes, I am painfully conscious that I have omitted many names that could be rightly included in these reminiscences, and whose life in New York added to its charm and intellectual atmosphere. But I did not meet nor hear all who would necessarily be embraced in such a list, so my readers can supply from their own memories those whom I have omitted and accept in advance this explanation of my apparent oversights.

The aftermath of the Civil War left no such devastation in the North as in the South. There an entire social system was upset, valuable property utterly destroyed and a huge country laid waste. The embers of the conflict were still red hot and flared up at the slightest provocation. When Cleveland, the first Democratic President since the War, proposed in a spirit of reconciliation—and what he thought was the sincere feeling of the North—to return to the South the



The Red Cross Nurse of 1871.

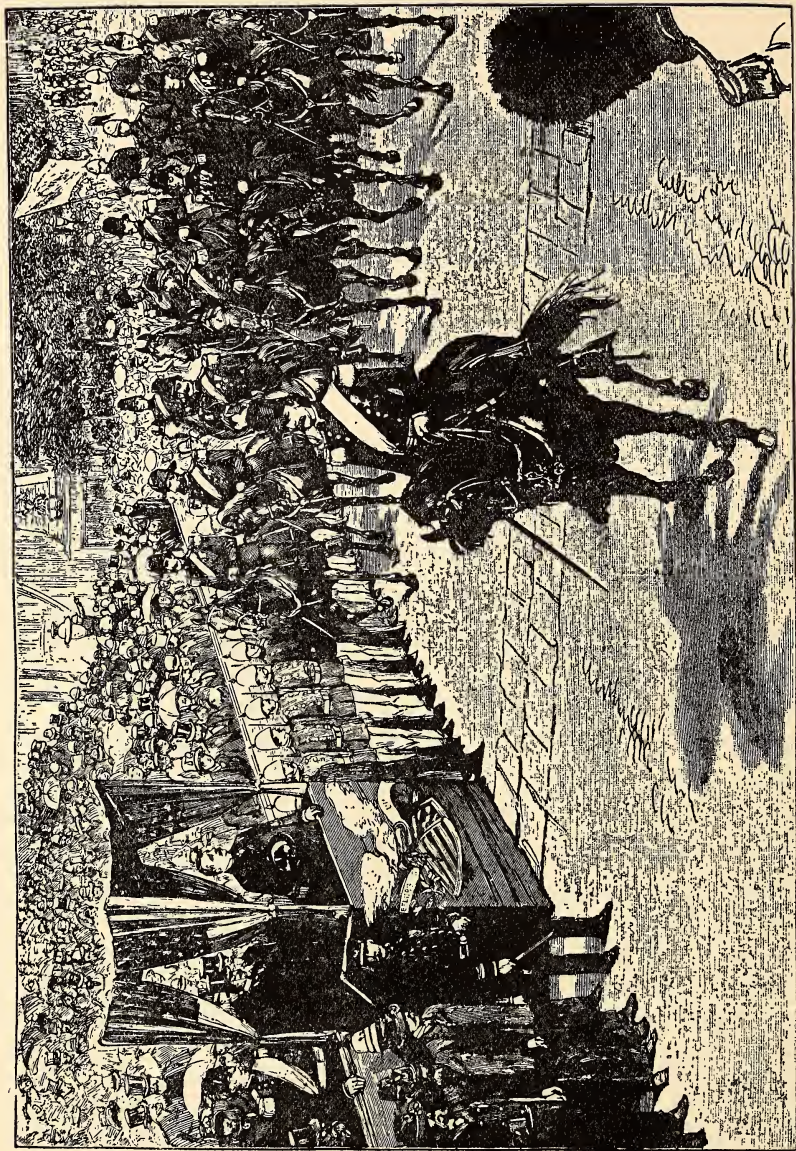
various battle flags captured during hostilities from our late antagonists, such a howl of indignation went up that even Cleveland, with all his inflexibility and mule-like obstinacy, was utterly dismayed and the order instantly canceled. Few persons were prepared for the tremendous feeling aroused by this incident and it was some time before the excitement died down. Of course, there were no end of demagogues to whom such an occurrence was meat and drink, and they made the most of it. They were the high priests and apostles who practiced what was popularly known as "Waving the Bloody Shirt." Any man who could point to an honorable record of service in the Union ranks and who decided to run for political office, was reasonably certain of the old soldier vote, which was then an important factor and usually the deciding influence. In the course of the campaign, he would naturally recall the anguish and the travail endured by the country at the time; and regardless of his fitness for the office, the sympathy evoked by this recital, greatly embellished by the sufferings and gallant conduct of the doughty hero himself, now seeking the favor of his constituents, would generally decide the contest in his favor. The Grand Army of the Republic had grown to enormous numbers by this time, and like all organizations born in the white heat of passion, it soon became in many cases the dupe of unscrupulous and unprincipled scoundrels. Yet such was their numerical strength that it meant practically political death to offend them.

The pension list became the object of their solicitude, and additions, increases, etc., were made in shameless disregard of merit or service. Washington fairly swarmed with Pension Agents. The situation became notorious and public opinion was defied. In such an atmosphere, it was with ill-suppressed excitement that the public observed a raid on the Treasury under the guise of beneficence to the veterans, which fairly reeked with corruption. So great, however, was the power of the G.A.R. and so fearful were the Congressmen of its retri-

bution, that none dared oppose the bill. The Dependent Pension Bill passed both Houses of Congress and went to the President for signature. To the utter amazement of the politicians, but to the gratification of all right-thinking men and women, Mr. Cleveland vetoed the bill! It was to the G.A.R. as if the end of the world had come.

Cleveland pointed out the many abuses in the bill and in his message to Congress made the now famous remark, "The Pension Roll is a Roll of Honor," and he did not propose to see it degraded by the illegal and criminal additions proposed by this measure.

Strange to relate, the country rallied to Mr. Cleveland's support and the bill failed to muster the necessary strength to be passed over his veto. This was nothing short of marvelous in those days and it dealt a severe blow to the abuses that had crept into what was originally meant to be a patriotic organization, but which was fast becoming a vicious influence in politics. A few years later, Col. George E. Waring, himself a veteran of unblemished record, stigmatized the association as a "grand army of bums." This created some newspaper talk, most of it in a whimsical vein, but instead of having Colonel Waring shot at sunrise, the G.A.R. pocketed the insult and the incident was permitted to pass without another civil war as might have been the case a few years earlier. The Cleveland and Blaine campaign marked the end of the Bloody Shirt Era so far as presidential politics were concerned. People grew tired of rehearsing the Civil War controversy every four years, and with Cleveland's election this issue as a great issue to place before the electorate ceased to exist. That there was still a great deal of feeling existing below the surface was amply demonstrated by the flag incident I have just related and by the enthusiasm which everywhere greeted a lecture by the Rev. T. de Witt Talmage who had a powerful description of the disbanding of the Union troops. This he recited at dinners in his church and on the Lyceum



President Cleveland reviewing the Decoration Day procession in New York, 1885.

platforms. But as a major incident in American politics, the Civil War ceased to exist.

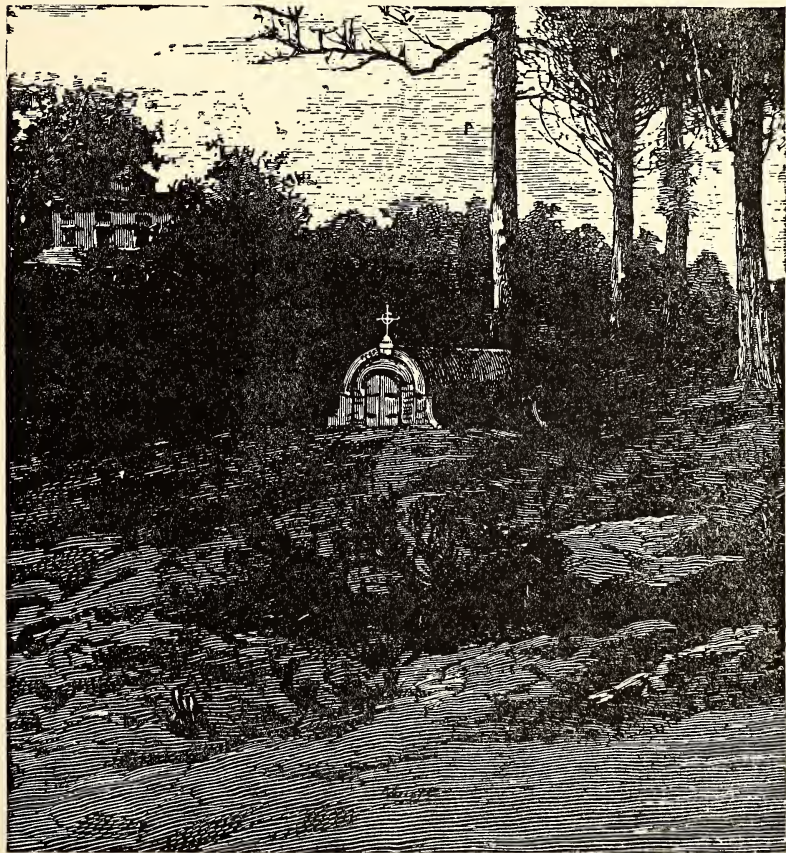
I have elsewhere alluded to the prominence and popularity of General Grant as a private citizen in New York at this time. Universal sympathy went out to him as a result of his unfortunate association with Fred B. Ward in the brokerage firm of Grant & Ward. A less sophisticated person in matters financial would have been hard to find. Nevertheless, General Grant permitted himself to be inveigled into what became the most notorious partnership in Wall Street. It is unnecessary to go further into details beyond stating that the inevitable duly happened and the firm failed, owing the not negligible sum of fourteen million dollars—a staggering sum for those days and equivalent to about ten times that amount to-day. Ward was sent to jail for a long term. Grant parted with all his personal possessions, including his remarkable collection of gifts and souvenirs from potentates and princes throughout the world. His friend, William H. Vanderbilt, took them as collateral for a quarter of a million loan. Mr. Vanderbilt was not actuated by any Shylock spirit, and intrinsically the collection was not worth anywhere near that as collateral; but he saw that the souvenirs would be dispersed by other creditors if not rescued and thus was saved a collection of great historic interest. This money, however, compared with the magnitude of the total liabilities was merely a flea bite. The failure completely beggared Grant, and in a vain attempt to earn money enough to pay off some if not all his creditors, the General undertook the preparation of his memoirs. The work was only started, when rumors of a serious illness began to circulate. In a few months, these rumors proved a certainty, and the whole country became resigned to the fact that her great Union General would not be with them long. The dread disease was cancer of the tongue.

The fight to finish his book ere death removed him became an exciting episode. The progress of his sickness was fol-

lowed day by day in the newspapers. Soon it became known that he could no longer speak—that his wants and desires were now made known by means of written slips of paper. In the vain hope of prolonging his life, he was moved to Mount MacGregor, a resort in the Adirondacks. This proved abortive, and when the end was plainly in sight his family yielded to his desire that he be taken back to his own home in New York. Here in Sixty-third Street he spent the remaining weeks of his life. On Decoration Day, he reviewed his swiftly vanishing hosts for the last time. The Grand Army of the Republic changed its line of march so as to pass the home of its great Commander. Propped up in the window Grant received their homage and their tears. He scribbled a message, "Let us have Peace," which immediately appeared in all the papers. It was his benediction to the South. By a superhuman effort, he practically completed his book. In a few weeks the General answered the last roll call and joined the army invisible, and this imposing figure was no more. His funeral in New York was a momentous occasion. All business was suspended. Practically all the great Union Generals then living were present. A unique feature of the parade was the great delegation of Confederate officers who were specially invited to attend the ceremonies. They were well known by name to New Yorkers, but few were known by sight. When they were pointed out and their identity disclosed, they received tremendous applause despite the solemnity of the occasion. It pleased them very much. No such mighty gathering had been seen in New York for generations. In fact, no public funeral of so distinguished a citizen had ever occurred before in New York, and the outpouring of the crowds on that occasion was phenomenal. Public and private buildings everywhere were draped in purple and black. The General's portrait looked out from every window, and his last message, "Let us have Peace," was hung from every point of vantage. It was a solemn and impressive occasion, and New York has never

again seen such a gathering of the great as marked her streets and avenues on that historic occasion.

His body was deposited temporarily in a vault near Riverside Drive, there to await the completion of the Memorial Tomb to rival Napoleon's which New York promised and which was nearly a generation in building. However, through the efforts of General Porter, New York was saved the disgrace of the threatened failure of the plans.



The temporary Tomb of General Grant.

CHAPTER XI

Lectures and "Foreign Culture"

THE Lyceum platform in those days was the scene of much intellectual accomplishment. Every little town had a "Lyceum," and it was astonishing the amount of talent these little bushrangers could assemble for their winter's entertainment. And the addresses were as a whole so excellent, so scholarly, so humorous and informing that many of them are still preserved in these old books that still adorn our libraries: *Modern Eloquence*, *Great Orations*, *Masterpieces of English Literature*, etc., etc. I remember Joel Benton, of Amenia, N. Y.—a little town of only a few hundred inhabitants, but having a good "Lyceum"—telling me that they had heard in one season alone, Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, Edward Everett Hale, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Cullen Bryant, Horace Greeley, and I can't remember how many others. Yet I understood that this was not at all an unusual record. There is no doubt of the fact that the little country Lyceum played a tremendously important part in our cultural development in those days and was a mighty moral force in the land. Thousands of men and women were engaged in this occupation and few men attained eminence in any field of endeavor without hearing the call to the platform. And an audience in a country town in those days could not assemble without considerable physical effort and no little discomfort. Yet these meetings were popular and were sustained for many years. The desire for a higher education, no doubt, was greatly stimulated by these modest meetings at the Lyceum in little country towns.

The lecture field was apparently a lucrative source of income, and one lecture would answer for a whole season. In the absence of a radio and a gentleman's agreement among



NO. 35 EAST NINETEENTH STREET, NEW YORK.

*Where Horace Greeley lived before he moved
to his farm in Westchester.*

the newspapers, not to spoil a lecture by reporting more than enough to give an idea of its excellence and create a desire to hear the rest—this was perfectly feasible. In this way, Robert Collyer, Russell Conwell, Edward Everett Hale, John B. Gough, "Bob" Burdette, "Bob" Ingersoll, Wendell Phillips,

Horace Greeley, Emerson, Beecher, and many others traveled the country from one end to the other, delivering the same speech. So that a lecture, like a play, enjoyed a similar popularity and you would be asked, "Have you heard So and So's lecture?" just as we would say, "Have you seen such and such a play?" There was undoubtedly a moral and educational aspect to this form of intellectual dissipation, which was highly commendable. Our fifteen-minute broadcasts of today have no such virtue, but they cover a much larger and wider field.

Gen. Horace Porter was always a much admired speaker. He afterwards performed a notable public service for New York by completing the fund necessary to erect the Tomb of General Grant—an enterprise that languished so long as to bring great reproach to the city. General Porter headed a committee, and in a few short months the entire huge amount was in the hands of the builders and the work commenced.

There were many clubs that gave notable dinners during the season, and all were marked by forensic oratory of the first quality. Besides the Union League, there was the Lotos Club and numerous Societies of this, that, and the other.

When Gilbert and Sullivan were entertained at the Lotos, Mr. Gilbert in his whimsical fashion made an adequate explanation of their presence on this side. "We have come over," he said, "to go into the musical comedy business; it appeared to be so prosperous here."

This allusion referred to the fact that no less than twenty companies at that moment were playing pirated versions of *Pinafore* in New York, out of which Gilbert and Sullivan made not a penny. Our copyright laws did not then protect a foreigner unless he came here, gave his first performance in this country, and thus established a basis for a copyright. So they had put on a dress rehearsal of *Ruddigore* and the *Pirates of Penzance*, neither of which were a tenth as popular as *Pinafore* or *The Mikado*. Both Mr. (not then, Sir Arthur)

Sullivan and Mr. Gilbert were received with tremendous enthusiasm.

Many accounts are given of the quarrel that separated these two friends. Some say Gilbert disliked a rug that Sullivan ordered for their office. The truth is that at a command performance given for Queen Victoria at Windsor, the program omitted all mention of Gilbert's name as librettist, though it mentioned the names of the bootmaker, who furnished footwear for the players; the mistress of the wardrobe, who looked after the costumes; the call boys, prompters, etc., but not a single mention of Gilbert. This was the final straw that broke the camel's back. In this way, he suffered very much as did Harry B. Smith, who wrote the librettos for *Robin Hood* and most of the other successes of Reginald De Koven's. But Mr. Smith took it more philosophically. His big checks consoled him. For years Mr. Gilbert had to endure this constant ignoring of his important part in the success of the comedies and read only eulogies of his partner, Sullivan. As he remarked bitterly on one occasion: "If the opera is a success, the composer gets all the credit. If it fails, it is the fault of the librettist." Finally, the strain became too great and the friends parted. Curiously enough, the two men never after succeeded in their separate undertakings.

It is not generally remembered that Gilbert is also the author of this whimsical ditty, uproarious in its conception and irresistible in its jocundity, and made many other valuable contributions to contemporary humorous literature:

'Twas on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!"

Sir Edwin Arnold at the Lotos Club recalled to its president, the genial Frank R. Lawrence, the fact that Sir Edwin was largely instrumental in arranging with the New York *Herald*, the expedition subsequently headed by Henry M. Stanley, which penetrated the wilds of Africa on the search for Livingstone. I followed this expedition with a peculiar personal interest. My father lived in part of the same house in which Livingstone also dwelt and worked with him in the same mill in Blantyre side by side.

Sir Edwin was a universally popular visitor from England and paid us the compliment of selecting his wife from this country. During Mr. Lawrence's tenure of office as President of the Lotos Club, this organization rose to a position of great and commanding influence among literary men and journalists. Mr. Lawrence made it his life work. He labored for the success and reputation of the Lotos in season and out, and was amply rewarded by seeing his club grow to be one of the most renowned organizations of its kind in the world and an adornment to the cultural life of New York. Almost every man of achievement in the intellectual world was entertained by the Lotos at one time or another.

Another Britisher who visited us at this time was Oscar Wilde. So much water has run over the dam since he graduated from Oxford and paid his first visit to New York that some of my readers will not recognize in the debonair, cultured and highly educated young man who made his bow at Chickering Hall on the evening of January 10, 1882, the Oscar Wilde of legend. All New York was there. At five o'clock no more tickets were to be had. Even the speculators had but few left. These rascally brigands, as the papers called them, had the effrontery to demand no less a figure than *two dol-*

lars for them. "Outrageous," "Scandalous," etc., were only a few of the epithets hurled at them. Fifty cents was then top hole for admission to entertainments of this kind.

Inside, the hall was packed. In defiance of the fire law, people stood in the aisles. There was not room left for another spectator.

At 8:30 Mr. Wilde appeared. He was strikingly dressed in a regulation swallow-tail coat with white satin low cut vest, double buttoned; black knee-breeches, black silk stockings and low-cut shoes. A single diamond shone in the exact center of his expansive shirt front, and a fine handkerchief was thrust negligently between it and his waistcoat. His collar turned down but was not cut very low, and a white silk tie was knotted evenly below it. At top and bottom he was artistic, but the middle was commonplace.

He made a rather effective figure on the platform. His brown hair, waving and fluffy, was pasted in the middle and fell in mass like the pictures of Charles the II, to his shoulders. He began his address in a well-modulated voice, and even when he delivered some of his characteristic epigrams there was no change in his tone. The audience listened to an excellent scholarly address on *Æstheticism*, enlivened with shafts of humor, and the impression on the whole was distinctly favorable. For more than a year Gilbert and Sullivan's opera *Patience* had been running to crowded houses, and in it Wilde as Bunthorne had been cleverly but mercilessly caricatured. Bunthorne with his cluster of chaste lilies was familiar to the audience and they were not a little surprised at the evident erudition of Bunthorne in the flesh and of his calm assurances regarding his own position. He began: "As you have listened for three hundred nights to my friend Arthur Sullivan's charming opera *Patience* (laughter) I will not ask too much, I hope, if I request your kind indulgence for only one night. (Great laughter.) As you have had satire, you may make the satire a little more piquant by knowing a

little more of the truth and not take the very brilliant lines of Mr. Gilbert any more as a revelation of the movement (æstheticism) than you would judge of the splendor of the sun or the majesty of the sea by the dust that dances in the beam or the bubble that breaks on the waves."

This simile was warmly applauded. A little later he remarked nonchalantly, "Satire is the homage which mediocrity pays to genius," and "To disagree with three-fourths of all England on all points is one of the first elements of sanity, and I hold the first duty of an art critic is to hold his tongue at all times upon all subjects." The nub of his discourse was probably contained in his closing sentences, "Into the sacred house of beauty the true artist will admit nothing which is harsh or disturbing: nothing about which men argue. The simple utterance of joy is poetry."

There is no doubt that the address struck a loftier note than was expected and that the young man, instead of being the posturing idiot the Press made him out to be, was justly admitted to be possessed of much wit, much culture and on the whole a decidedly worth-while person. At this particular moment in Wilde's career, Fate was kind to him. She opened wide for him the gates of Fame and Immortality. It was Wilde himself who closed them.

Many, many years afterward, seated in the Library with Vance Thompson, who had just returned from an extended stay in Paris, he remarked: "It's too bad about Wilde; he is merely a human cask for the reception of free whiskey. He will sit and talk with anyone who will buy him a drink."

Shortly after the news of his death was in the papers, and thus ended a career which might have furnished one of the brightest pages in English literature.

CHAPTER XII

Spotless Town and Currier & Ives Prints

OUR city had at one time a Street Cleaning Commissioner who made and kept New York a clean city. He really believed that he should manage his department solely in the interest of the work in hand and not for the benefit of a lot of politicians. Col. George F. Waring is a name to revere and to remember. And he maintained that ideal in the highest degree in the face of the fiercest ridicule that ever pursued an idealist, always setting an example that no commissioner since his time has been able to follow, despite all the money that has been allocated to the department every year. With all that he accomplished, it is a singular mystery why no other commissioner since his day has made more than a perfunctory effort to keep the streets of this city clean.

It was Colonel Waring who originated the phrase White Wings when he ordered the employees of his department to wear white duck raiment when at work, a measure designed to provoke cleanliness and that acted as a deterrent to loafing on the job, since it made the street cleaners as conspicuous as window sitters in Fifth Avenue clubs. The order aroused derision and sneers as well as considerable newspaper criticism: the notion that men cleaning the streets in white garb, and ordered to keep it white, was almost too ridiculous for words.

But Colonel Waring persisted, and as he had the backing of Mayor Strong, who appointed him, the street cleaners blossomed out in gorgeous white uniforms and became a delightful feature in the New York scene while the novelty

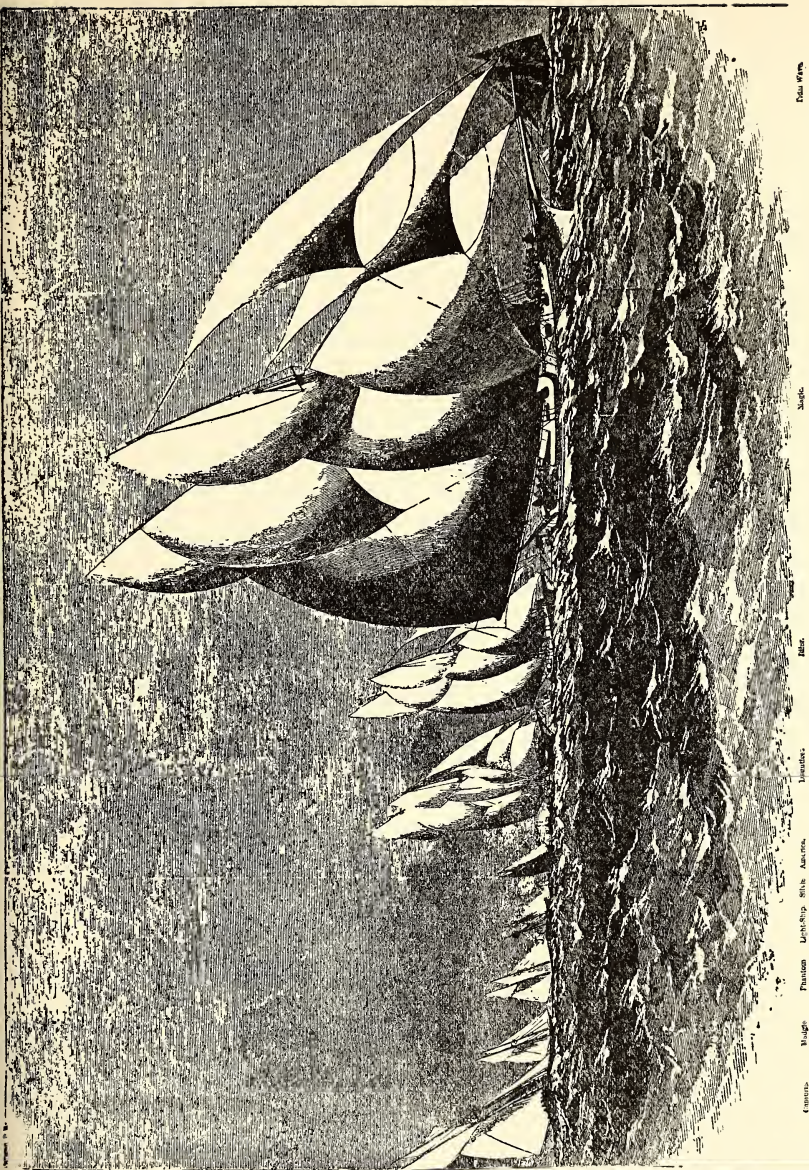
lasted. When this passed off and the Colonel had had time to equip his department adequately, he decided to show the city what it possessed in the way of a Street Cleaning Department—something no one had given much thought to before that. It had been considered just an institution for politicians to play with in handing out jobs to lowly constituents. Cleaning streets figured only as surplusage.

This showing of the one city department that was worth exhibiting was to be made by means of a parade of all the employees of the department, with its equipment. The affair was properly publicized and the line of march laid out and announced. And everybody prepared to have a good time watching a procession of motley. But Colonel Waring had given orders that all uniforms were to be furbished up like new, the equipment was to be spick and span and the men cautioned to be on their mettle for the gala event.

When the day of the parade arrived, the streets through which it was to pass were lined with people, most of whom had come to scoff. But it was an amazing sight to which they had been bidden. Instead of a procession of shiftless-looking laborers they had expected, there marched before them as proud-appearing a lot of workers as had ever paraded about this city, and their manifest pride as they trundled after them a great variety of street-cleaning apparatus won deserved and unashamed applause. The apparatus alone was a marvelous demonstration of the efficiency which had penetrated the department. And those of the populace that had come to scoff remained to praise.

After this signal service to New York, Colonel Waring took up the fight against cholera in Havana. In this noble work, his life was forfeited. It was a characteristic ending to a man who had proved his courage and his ability in the service of his fellow-men, despite the attacks of politicians and defamers of whom he had more than his share.

I am always greatly interested in the sales of Currier & Ives



Edw. W. W.

Mast

Main

Foremast

Yacht

Frigate

Other

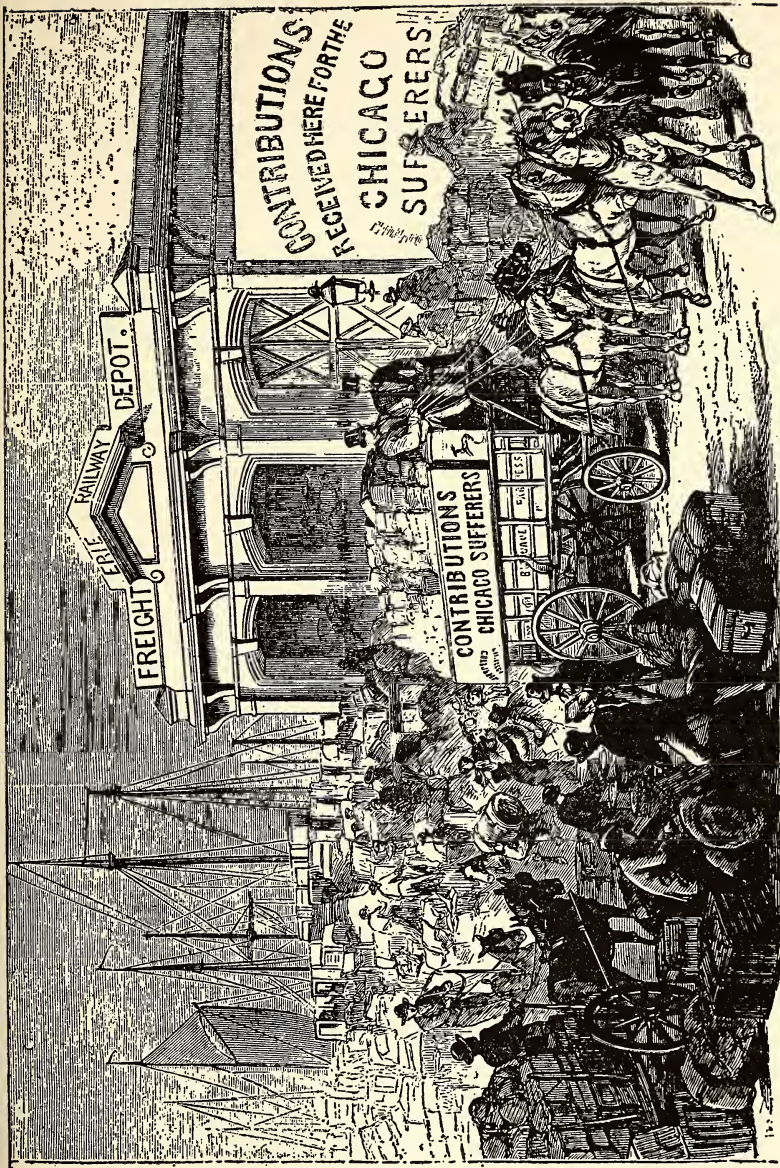
The race for the Queen's Cup—rounding the Light-Ship, 1870.

prints and rejoice exceedingly at the high prices they bring; it seems to be some justification for the many hours I spent gazing at the pictures in their old shop in Nassau near Fulton Street. It was a fine large window—one of the very few plate glass windows in town of that size.

Behind it was spread a feast of art for a boy's hungry eyes. I remember the fascination the old shop pictures possessed for me, especially the old Clippers—*Sovereign of the Sea*, *Dreadnought*, *Three Brothers* and the *North Star*. The *North Star* was published in London, probably imported by them because it was the first steam yacht ever to cross the ocean on a purely pleasure trip. It was owned by old Cornelius Vanderbilt, and was the eighth wonder of the world. The *Alvah*, on which his grandson, William K., now tours the world in search of marine treasures, is no more costly for its day than the *North Star*. Another picture that drew much attention was the *America*—that blue ribbon winner built by Henry Steers up on the old dry-dock section where all the shipyards were.

Since those early days I have never lost my interest in these old ship pictures. At one time when they could be bought for 50 cents to a dollar each, I had quite a collection stuck up on the walls of my modest room, and ultimately I came to know a lot about Captain Nat Palmer, Captain Cressy, Captain Clarke, and a dozen other of these old master mariners.

It's astonishing to recall how many of our old families made their first big money in shipping—John Johnston, grandfather of Mrs. Robert de Forrest; Warren Delano, one of Franklin D.'s ancestors, and whose grandson of the same name was a member of the Federal Reserve. John Jacob Astor, who evaded Jefferson's embargo and on the plea that he was returning a high-class mandarin to China, cleared a ship for the Orient which presently returned with a huge cargo of tea, silks and spices. Astor cleared a huge fortune from this voyage alone.



Scene at the Erie Ferry-House, foot of Twenty-third St., North River, 1871.

One might go on indefinitely about these old ships; for the Clipper Era was a brilliant page in American maritime history and I never tire reading about them. Up the Hudson was the favorite home port of many of these old shipping merchants. The Aspinwalls, the Havilands, the Minturns, the Webbs, Marshalls, Macys, etc., etc., all had stately homes between Spuyten Duyvil and Tarrytown.

The Low family of Brooklyn, whose best-known representative in the present generation was the late Seth Low, former Mayor of both Brooklyn and New York and President of Columbia College, were among the largest families in New York. And on Columbia Heights in Brooklyn where they lived, it was no uncommon sight to meet Abner Low, head of the house, coming down the street with Capt. Nat Palmer, Captain Cressy, or some of the other famous ship commanders.

South Street in those days, with its forest of masts, was a fascinating sight. The bowsprits of many of these ships stretched clear across the street and almost poked their noses in the windows of the offices opposite. The odors of pine, tar, oakum, fresh shavings and spices of the Orient, were intoxicating to my boyish senses and an errand along that picturesque thoroughfare was always an event looked forward to with pleasurable anticipation. I have since seen the famous Lime House district of London and the India Docks, have walked along the seven miles of shipping in Antwerp, and along the waterfront of Marseilles, but none of them today even approach old South Street as it was in the days of my youth.

With the rapid development of the marine boiler and the opening of the Suez Canal, the end of these square-rigger belles of the Seven Seas was plainly in sight. For eighteen centuries, man had sailed the oceans, helpless alike in storms or in calm, and forever at the mercy of wind or wave. Now his mastery of the deep was accomplished. He could leave Southampton one day at noon, predict his arrival in New

York six days later, at a certain hour, and tie up at the dock exactly on schedule. It is practical, but not romantic. No more sighting Java Head in the morning and landing God Knows Where in the evening. All very pretty and nice to have Joe Hergesheimer tell about it. But, alas! it isn't cricket any more.

The old Mississippi also came in for a fine showing in these old Currier & Ives windows. The *Robert E. Lee* and her famous race with the *Natchez* was shown in lurid colors. A bright moon was shining and the stacks of both steamboats belched forth lurid flames. You could almost hear the captains cursing and the Negroes piling on the fire wood. It was a stirring picture. There was a song written about the *Robert E. Lee*.

Edna Ferber's *Show Boat* has recalled a pleasant bit of life on the old river, and Ida Tarbell's description of Lincoln making his own raft and sailing down from New Salem to New Orleans gives us another glimpse of a most engaging period in our country's progress. Currier & Ives rendered a great public service, however unwittingly, in thus preserving for us these bits of real Americanism in the early life of Old Man River.

I am justified in speaking thus at length of Old Mississippi in an Old New York book, because the first steamboat to ply these waters was built by a New Yorker, Nicholas Roosevelt, another brilliant member of this famous family.

There was always a gaping crowd in front of 150 Nassau Street, and it was not always composed of messenger boys, bearing packages marked "*Immediate*" or "*Special Delivery*." There was always a good sprinkling of the average business man, country visitors, etc. One particular series of pictures had its own special school of admirers—the Darktown Series. This was a series of Negro pictures by Thomas Worth that were irresistibly funny and portrayed our colored friends in

characteristic scenes. "The Darktown Fire Brigade" was my favorite series—the rickety old hand-worked fire engine, the valiant fire laddies in red flannel shirts, huge leather hats, all of them constantly getting in each other's way, was to my mind indescribably funny. I used to laugh my head off. Then there was the billiard series. "Two to Go!" and "Got Them Both!" In "Getting Them Both," the hero's cue slipped in some mysterious manner and before equilibrium was restored, the entire billiard room was wrecked. Worth used to draw these sketches in Sandy Spencer's oyster saloon in the basement of the building under what was then the National Park Bank Building on Broadway just a short block from the Currier place.

Currier & Ives prints have real historic interest, and as the country grows older, they will constantly appreciate in value. When I see some of these old pictures bring eight and nine hundred dollars apiece at auction these days and think that I could have had all I wanted from twenty-five cents up, I begin to realize that I wasn't such a smart office boy as my indulgent employers used to think.

CHAPTER XIII

New York Stage and Midnight Suppers

ONE of the pleasantest memories left of the Centennial '70s is undoubtedly the career of Augustus Daly's company at the old playhouse on Broadway and Thirtieth Street, known the length and breadth of the island as Daly's Theatre. And a first night at this celebrated shrine of the mimics was a ritual in old New York society. It was graced by the presence of men and women eminent in all walks of life; not to be at the first night of the opening of a new season was to bury yourself in social oblivion. Many of the names are now familiar to the great majority of present-day New Yorkers. Fifth Avenue from Washington Square to the park was still the citadel of Who was Who in New York. After six o'clock you could hear the tinkle of the bells on the Forty-second Street crosstown cars clear up to the Plaza and as far south as Madison Square. Scarcely a soul would be in sight, and when the time came to leave for the theater, the staccato slam of the carriage door closing and the clop-clop of the iron hoofs on the Belgian highway could be heard for blocks.

The height of Daly's success starting in '79 was achieved in the '80s. Starting with a hastily formed organization, he rapidly built up a company that was afterwards to achieve international renown and was to become famous, not only in New York, but in London, Paris and Berlin as well. Shakespearean scholars abroad were extremely anxious to see what an American company could do with *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and

other light comedies of England's greatest dramatist. The complete triumph of the company especially in England is now a pleasant legend in the history of the American stage.

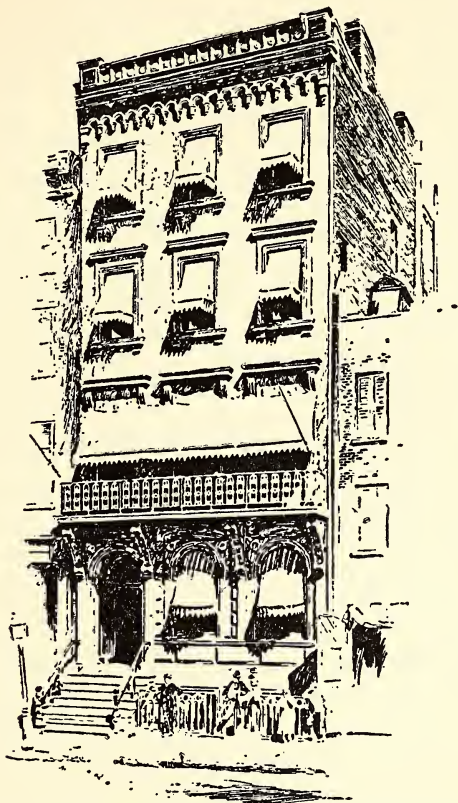
Ada Rehan was, of course, the bright particular star of the company. Few actresses on our stage ever enjoyed the popularity and the general esteem bestowed upon this charming woman. Possessing with a marvelously musical voice, the fatal gift of beauty, and liberally endowed with natural talents for the career which she had chosen, Miss Rehan reigned supreme in her field for many years. The death of Mr. Daly produced a profound change in Miss Rehan's career. Something seemed to have gone out of her life. The advancing years wrought havoc with many old-time favorites and also with Daly's famous old company, and soon the playgoing public were to know them no more.

In a light society skit called *Newport*, the play called for the appearance of a small donkey in the last act. Till then he was discreetly tethered behind stage. One evening when Mr. George Parker, the leading man in the play, was making violent love on a bench to Miss Rehan, a ravishing young belle, he recited these lines with fine effect: "Adorable creature, never have I met a soul so congenial, so perfectly a mate for my own," when that absurd donkey standing in the left wing lifted his voice in a terrific "hee haw, hee haw" completely drowning the rest of the speech.

But that was not all. (This is taken from a diary kept by one of the younger members at the time and was never expected to be seen by other eyes than the author.) The same donkey, when he did come upon the stage, committed a horrible breach of etiquette and wound up by butting Mr. Parker so violently that he fell amid the débris and arose with his light lavender trousers bearing visible marks of his mishap. The audience was convulsed and the curtain descended upon a wholly demoralized company.

John Drew, James Lewis, John Gilbert, Mrs. Gilbert,

Harry Lacey, Charles Ledercq, Charles Fisher, Isabelle Ericson, Helen Blythe, Clara Morris, and a host of others, were soon to be on Daly's staff and his theater to assume the first



NO. 174 HUDSON STREET, NEW YORK, 1890.

Where William E. Burton lived many years while he enjoyed the reputation of a popular comedian.

rank in American stage life. The decade in which Daly's troupe reigned supreme were golden years for polite comedy. The Shakespearean plays were always awaited with delight and in *The Taming of the Shrew* with Ada Rehan as Kate

and John Drew as Petruchio, the highest pinnacle in Shakespearean presentations on this side was achieved. The final supper scene in *Taming of the Shrew* was long remembered in the annals of the New York stage.

Besides being a rendezvous of society, Daly's Theatre was one of the most successful matrimonial bureaus in the history of the local stage. Only the record of the original *Florodora* girls rivals the connubial annals of the premier playhouse of Gotham. Of course, the classic instance was the marriage of Edith Kingdon to the oldest son of the enormously wealthy Jay Gould. But there were also some less glamorous alliances of interest such as that of Mabel Thompson and Howard Chandler Christy, Mabelle Gilman and William Ellis Corey, and Minnie Ashley and William Astor Chandler. Minnie Ashley will be remembered by many oldsters as the charming Rhoda of *San Toy*, singing,

Rhoda, Rhoda, had a pagoda
Serving tea, and ices, and soda.

One of the minor players in Daly's company in the 'gos was Isadora Duncan, the late famous classic dancer, and the first exponent of bare legs on the American stage. Both Isadora Duncan and Mabelle Gilman made their New York débuts in Daly's production of *The Geisha*. Later on, Miss Duncan danced in the prologue of *Meg Merrilies* in the gypsy dance that was Daly's added feature to Charlotte Cushman's famous characterizations.

No one who is unacquainted with the "society drama" of the past can have any idea of the supreme importance of the feather-duster in the furtherance of its plot. The feather-duster was the playwright's invariable formula whenever he opened his drama on a "drawing-room" scene. It was never used in any other apartment so far as my recollection serves, but every well-regulated salon in the Bronson Howard-

Bartley Campbell drama was disclosed with a housemaid wearing a dainty white apron and high-heeled patent leather shoes, wielding this now discredited domestic implement; and so "Mr. Van Alstyne's Morning Room, 10 A.M. New



NO. 436 WEST TWENTY-SECOND STREET, NEW YORK.

*Where Edwin Forrest, the actor, and his wife,
Catharine Sinclair, lived.*

Year's Day" or "Mrs. Stuyvesant Park's Drawing Room, 5 P.M. on Washington's Birthday" were both subject to the same curious application of feathers. Of course, the housemaid got out of the room as soon as "Master" appeared, whether she had finished her stint or not; but sometimes she ceased operations to banter Sam, the footman, or to sauce the

pompous English butler of every well-regulated New York stockbroker's domicile. I am pleasantly reminded of this ancient theatrical tradition by some notes from the same diary, from which I have already quoted.

"A curious thing happened at rehearsal one day this week, in which we saw the effect of Mr. Daly's discipline. A young lady, Miss B—, who has not been in any play since the production of *Newport*, had the part of a maid in *An Arabian Night*—quite a good part it is too. At rehearsal, when she was 'discovered' dusting furniture at the opening of the first act (by the way, that dusting business is so old—why don't they ever water the plants, feed the canary or the goldfish or arrange the books in the bookcase?) she handled the feather-duster in the most awkward way and didn't really dust at all. Mr. Daly called out to her two or three times to do it differently, but she wouldn't; so he clambered up over the seats and up on the stage, grabbed the duster from her, and proceeded to go for the furniture with all the energy of a brand-new housemaid.

" 'That's the way to dust,' he said. 'Haven't you ever dusted any furniture, Miss B—?'

" 'No, sir, I never have,' was the haughty reply, at which we all smiled. Then he said something that I did not catch exactly and handed back the duster to her. She made a few more feeble little dabs at a table, looking very angry. Mr. Daly gave one of his withering, sarcastic laughs and said, 'Oh, Lord!' whereupon the distressed damsel burst into tears, threw up the duster, and went home. Mr. Daly simply turned and said, 'Send a messenger at once for Miss Flagg.' So no girl can make a bit of an impression by playing the fine lady and pretending she doesn't know how to dust. Miss Flagg arrived within half an hour. She read the lines when they went over the scene again, and she took that duster and dusted."

The first attempts to gain serious consideration for the work of American dramatists began about this time. Bron-

son Howard, Bartley Campbell, McKee Rankin, Steele Mac-kaye, Augustus Thomas who gave us *The Banker's Daughter*, *Hazel Kirk*, *My Partner*, *The Danites*, *Arizona*, etc., marked a distinct departure from the exclusively British productions interminably provided for that by the indefatigable Wallacks, father and son. They were a welcome relief from the red-coated Britisher, the lordly earl and the Irish villain always dressed in green. And the plays were refreshingly interesting. In *My Partner*, we saw the forerunner of all the Wild Western drama that was to bloom so luxuriantly a few years later and to give us such fascinating dramas as *The Girl of the Golden West*, *Rose of the Rancho* and many others. The list of these thoroughly American plays was further augmented by a similar contribution depicting life in New England, 'Way Down East and *The Old Homestead*. That they were the literary and dramatic equal of any that came out of h'old H'England, I have no doubt. They were also box office successes, which is the final test for everything artistic in this country.

The star system had not as yet become the institution it was later destined to be, and stock companies were the rule. Madison Square, Union Square, Wallacks and the Lyceum were organized on the stock plan. It would be interesting to recall some of their successes, but a representative portrayal of the many fine plays produced by these capable persons cannot be adequately covered in the limited space at my command.

Although *The Black Crook* may be called the grandpa of all our *Follies* of late calendar years, of our *Scandals* and *Re-vues*, it was not until the '70s that the burlesque queen and the professional stage beauty really got geared up for making the grade. Then came Lydia Thompson and her company of "British Blondes" to avenge Yorktown and Saratoga, and to excite the local stage door Johnny and clubman to a state of mild hysteria. These ladies literally cast our caramel-chewing,

soda-water gulping damsels in the shade, in the amplitude of their 12 "stone" and upward. They looked like the daughters of hardy Norsemen and their complexions didn't owe a thing to anybody's cold cream or mud pack. A little *souper a deux* with one of these coryphees was a fearsome thing. I have it on unimpeachable first-hand authority that sirloin steak and potatoes, preceded by anchovies on toast, and succeeded by a platter of tripe and onions, and a wedge of Stilton, the whole washed down by a couple of pints of Bass's, was only an ordinary midnight snack to this cheerful émigré, calculated to induce a sound night's sleep and a healthy appetite for breakfast in the morning.

I have no doubt that a reference to a "silhouette," or a "straight front" or a "boyishform" or any of our late fashion page patter would have been regarded by these ladies as qualifications for Bedlam or Colney Hatch (what a delightful name for this latter, almost as flavorsome as Wormwood Scrubs). Curves, undulations and sinuosities were the coveted outlines of the day, and the British Blonde had them all, and then some.

There were no drug-store lunches in those days, and if there were, I cannot imagine one of these sturdy troupers wasting her time on lettuce-leaf sandwiches and orange juice. The nourishment required to support an Amazon during a tour of these United States, fifty years ago, could not be acquired by Vitamin A, B or C. One had to work further down the alphabet and then add a plate of corned beef and cabbage as ballast. But food was amazingly cheap after the panic of '73 and for many years thereafter. There were no food trusts, and I have seen a fine box of strawberries sell for four cents. There were boarding houses of a humble class where one could live substantially with occasional luxuries, for as little as five dollars a week, and in the very poorest districts there were eating houses serving dishes at three, four and five cents each. Of course, wages were correspondingly low, but many

of the city's greatest merchants of later years found the period a favorable one to obtain a foothold on prosperity.

The long reign of the Wallacks, father and son, was, however, at last ended and American productions then had a chance for existence. The Wallacks' era was naturally a continuation of the British traditions and nothing that did not reek with old castles, titled lords and ladies and missing heirs, had a chance. We might as well have brought over His Majesty's Theatre and Drury Lane complete.

The old stock companies, which for many years were a feature of the New York stage, provided much better entertainment on the whole than the star systems, which succeeded a few years later. In the stock companies, the entire company was made up of competent players. The result was a performance of equal brilliancy throughout. The members of the cast were known to the audience individually and each actor received due praise for her or his work. There was an atmosphere of friendliness in the theater which was strangely lacking under the star system, and the names of the players are still remembered by many old patrons, though the exact rôles which each of them essayed has long been forgotten. Fanny Davenport, Kate Forsythe, Rose Coghlan, Effie Shannon, Miriam Ponsini, are only a few of the many favorites in the days of the Union Square, Madison Square, the Lyceum and the old Bowery.

The city at that time had a tremendous population of Irish and Germans. The Latin races were negligible in number. And a series of plays by Harrigan and Hart, based largely on the Irish element in New York, reached a degree of popularity which, for many years, was an important factor in our native drama. Although plays were based on foreign peoples, the production was essentially American, and Harrigan and Hart contributed original work based entirely on local life. In this sense, their work can truly be said to belong to the American school and ranked equally high with the more fin-

ished and representative school of Bronson Howard, Bartley Campbell, Steele Mackaye, Augustus Thomas, Clyde Fitch or Eugene O'Neill.

We had two extraordinarily good actors in those days—Edwin Booth and Joseph Jefferson. They were exponents of the star system to the point of absurdity. Sterling actor as Booth was, he would tour the country with such a company of unspeakable mediocrity that his performances took on more the character of a monologue than a play. Jefferson, in the vernacular of the mining camp, struck pay dirt early in his career as Bob Acres in *The Rivals*. A man of rare histrionic ability, he buried his talents in this napkin. And for almost half a century, the public saw nothing of Jefferson in the extensive repertoire of which he was capable, but only in the one shopworn play which each succeeding generation must perforce endure. It provided Joe with a satisfactory and comfortable living, an unusual happening to the average Thespian, and perhaps I should not thus criticize him. But I cannot help thinking of Mansfield who tempted Fate time and again and left the stage immeasurably richer for his brief appearance on it.

One is fain to linger on these far-off days of the theater. They seem so much more romantic, so much more enchanting, than the present vogue for celluloid counterfeits. But one must not forget that youth—the painter, the sculptor, the poet of all things beautiful—was also with us in those days and that makes a great difference.

One of the outstanding vocal features in the less pretentious theaters of my time, was the quartet. No well-conducted musical program was complete without this contrapuntal firing squad lined up for "Annie Laurie," "Oft in the Stilly Night," and other unnecessary noises. All the old-time melodramas included a quartet in their *mise-en-scène* as they did trick sharpshooters, trained mustangs, broadsword experts and other developers of the plot. The announcement

that the Big Four, or the Empire State Entertainers would appear in the big Waterloo Bridge scene of *Lost in London* was an immeasurable enhancement of that priceless drama. Of a verity, as soon as the quartet got into a position, which, over the turbid Thames, always reminded me of a Bowery photographer's bridal group, they discharged "I Stood on the Bridge at Midnight." This was a ritual. I have no doubt that an instant insurrection and a demand for the return of our money would have been the result of the substitution of any other song. And don't think that the second line—"As the clocks were striking the hour"—was ignored by the astute stage managers of the innocent '70s who had all the "props" of radio hokum, even before this divine invention was thought of. As the quartet appeared, the boom of Big Ben was the *leit motif* of the song. How the audience would count the strokes, to make sure that they were getting all they paid for, and that no midnight savings scheme was attempted. After the *Baltimore Ideals* had cleared the traffic over the bridge, the heroine, fresh from Devonshire, in a tight-fitting black dress that followed her contours with a laudable tenacity, appeared bearing *the child*. Some day I shall reveal the antecedents of this infant. How its parents, despite the ill-natured slurs of Devonian purists, had been married all the time. But now the bonny lassie from the hedgerows is on the bridge, pursued by a male in a high hat, cutaway coat, black satin cravat, tight trousers, pointed shoes, and spats. No sophisticated audience needed any psychoanalysis of this creature, for was he not the appointed instrument of the high gods to hurl the heroine and her "brat" from the bridge; and we may be sure he did so, for did we not witness the splash that rebounded over the parapet—yes, we will go before a Commissioner of Deeds at any time to solemnly affirm that real water marked this dastardly attempt to do away with the rightful heir.

Nor shall we forget the quartet of the English "Sporting"

melodrama; the jolly roysterers on the way home from the Henley Regatta, who paused, in the dead of night, on the banks of the Thames, to pay lyric tribute to the "Twickenham Ferry." This was also accompanied by realistic clock chimes from a belfry on the opposite shore, and followed by a scene of violence involving the destruction of the hero to prevent his winning the boat race on the morrow. The quartet always served as a kind of overture to the catastrophe. All Southern plays from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to *The White Slave* had an "Old Kentucky Home" quartet, regardless of whether the locale chanced to be in Georgia or Alabama. A quartet I once heard in Madison Square, sang "The Old Oaken Bucket" with a back drop showing the Hoffman House, and no one complained.

By far the greatest record in quartet longevity was achieved by that in *The Old Homestead*, a bucolic drama that would put any McCormick reaper to shame in the matter of reaping shekels for its owner and perpetrator, Denman Thompson.



Scene from an early New York drama.

"A word first, if you please, sir!"

The quartet in this instance made the Broadway front of Grace Church a kind of wailing-wall for the earnest inquiry, "Where is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" This did not cause so much concern in New York, where everybody knew that the blithesome lad was down at the Dutchman's or shooting pool for the drinks over at Dolan's; but many an eye welled up in the Home Town thinking of the boy trying to make good in that cesspool of iniquity, "The New Babylon." Their anguish would, no doubt, have been greatly intensified had they learned that he was at that very moment paying five cents for a schooner of suds, while there was a cellar full of galvanic applejack in the old homestead at that very moment, that could be had for nothing. So this song ranked with *East Lynne*, *Camille*, and the apotheosis of Little Eva, as sure-fire sob-stuff, and any show that could excite the lachrymal glands of the road, needed only Bullinger's Guide as a booking route. For years, the *Old Homestead* was a perennial rite like Barnum's Circus, sulphur and molasses, seedtime and harvest, and Santa Claus; the quartet waxed from stentorian youth to quavering old age, and passed down the aisles of time like animated phonograph records, until their vocal chords ultimately cracked as records also do.

"Silver Threads Among the Gold" had tremendous vogue in those days, as did "Juanita," "The Blue Danube," "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean," "Monastery Bells," and "Good Night, Ladies!"

A peculiarity of the theater in those days was the adoration of the matinee girl for her favorite on the stage. During the run of *The Little Minister*, the stage entrance of the Empire was thronged with violet-laden devotees who stood patiently waiting for Maude Adams to come out to her hansom, hoping that, as she hurried by, she might accept one of the bouquets held out to her or perhaps by some lucky chance drop a glove or a handkerchief. These would be snatched up and carried off to some schoolgirl sanctum. Ethel Barrymore's ad-

mirers were about evenly divided between the young bloods of the day who wanted to marry her and the matinee girls who tried to copy her delightful, seductive, throaty voice and mobbed her after performances in the hope that the haughty Ethel would glance their way, which she rarely did. Mary Mannering likewise had her quota of stagedoor followers who imitated the Janice Meredith curl which the actress made famous during the run of that play. Unlike the shy Ethel and the mystery-enshrouded Maude Adams, Mary Mannering rewarded her devotees with a dazzling smile and always some warm-hearted expression of appreciation of their devotion, so that when she married Hackett, it seemed a right and fitting climax to the many romantic love scenes they had seen these two enact.

In those days we said it with flowers to our stage favorites right out in front of everybody, usually at the end of the first act when the hurried tramp of the ushers' feet, as they rushed the huge floral offerings to the stage and handed them over the footlights to riotous applause, was as much a part of the *entr'acte* as the selections by the orchestra. Nor did the audience wait until the end of an act, either, to show its appreciation of some particularly thrilling or charming bit of acting. A heroic speech, a rescue of the leading lady in the nick of time, and bouquets which a moment before had ornamented the bosoms of the well-dressed feminine theater-goers, were torn loose from their moorings and hurled at the stage, sometimes with disastrous results. It must also be confessed that the behavior of the audience was frequently embarrassing to the players, since they often insisted that the dead or fainting Thespian arise, take the flowers and bow, before the action was allowed to proceed.

Out in the lobby, before the performance, these floral tributes were on display so that all who looked might see which members of the cast received the greatest number; but alas for this most charming custom, it was whispered by some

old meanies that many of the five-foot floral offerings were purchased by the actors themselves and sent to the theater with fictitious names attached. Of course, there was no truth in this, but the rush of the flower-laden ushers down the aisles was found to be a serious interference with the carefully selected *entr'acte* program. Some hard-boiled conductors were even said to have objected strenuously to being hit on the head with the flying bouquets. Followed a managerial pronouncement and one more prerogative of the audience passed into history along with the wearing of hats by the ladies.

Another and more celebrated feature of New York after-theater life was the bird and bottle supper with the musical comedy stars. The witching hour at these parties was eleven-thirty, when the show girls began to drift in from the various Broadway successes. It was a sight for the gods to watch their majestic progress down the room. The famous beauties, whose pictures were in the lobbies and whose names were in the feature stories, knew just the right moment for their entrance into the crowded restaurants. The wise orchestra leader knew his cue and, as a headliner appeared at the door with her escort, he gave the signal to his men and the strains of her song hit greeted her. She was always just so surprised; fluttered nervously with the great bouquets of violets or orchids which her well-repaid admirer carried for her and finally, with every eye upon her, walked slowly to their reserved table. Her costly pearl dog-collar was well displayed upon her shapely neck; her beautiful arms bare to the shoulder, her tightly laced waist throwing into bold relief the rounded bosom and the swelling hips, swathed in the most clinging of satin skirts that swept the floor in a long, billowing train.

Each talked-about beauty, whether show girl, high-priced star or member of the chorus, had her similar entrance, drew her own little crowd of devotees and provided ample thrills and excitement for the crowd without the slightest effort.

True, these abandoned creatures did not smoke in those days—for well they knew that an outraged proprietor would have had them unceremoniously escorted to the door, at such an open affront to public decency. However, there were compensations. Hundred dollar bills and diamond necklaces were frequently tucked into the bunches of flowers that the flower girls sold from high-heaped trays; champagne flowed like water; it did not need Texas Guinan in those rosy days to plead: "Give this little girl a hand." The little girl of the 'gos didn't need a bit of help.

These recollections of other and younger days brings back also the unalloyed delight with which I watched the bill poster cover the fence around the empty lots near my house with the most exciting, thrilling, blood-curdling pictures that ever were on land or sea. I remember, as if it were but yesterday, Augustin Daly's first play, *Under the Gaslight*. The hero was tied to the railroad track and the headlights of the express rounding the curve were throwing their beams upon him, so close was the impending doom. Of course, the heroine breaks down the door of the cabin that confined her and cuts her lover loose just in time. Then there was that pure young soul in *Only a Working Girl* smarting under the insults of the proud and haughty daughter of the rich. Then there was *The Silver King* returning to his snow-laden cottage, just in time to save it from the ruthless extortioner about to foreclose the inevitable mortgage. I can see the hero of *The Still Alarm* driving his white horses and fire engine to the rescue of the maiden in the burning mansion. I can see the boat race in *The Dark Secret*, rowed in I don't know how many thousand gallons of real water. This was the first tank drama. I can see Bettina Girard riding the winner in *Old Kentucky* and Leonard Boyne, in *The Prodigal Daughter*. I can see any number of bodies lashed to the rails of *The Limited Mail*, *The Pay Train*, *The Fast Express*, or lashed to the plank in *Blue Jeans*. I can see the duel in the snow of *The*

Corsican Brothers, and *Monte Cristo* on the wave-lashed rock shrieking "The World Is Mine!" I can see the human bridge over which the heroine of *Hands Across the Sea* crosses the chasm in escaping from her pursuers. An unforgotten scene is that of the troupe of exiles in *Siberia* on their way to that airy region under the lashes of the Cossacks. I think it was in this play that the phrase "Back to the Mines!" had its origin. Other Arctic pictures that cross my mind while my feet are on the fender and I watch my twenty dollars a ton coals go to blazes, are those of *The Land of the Midnight Sun*, *The Sea of Ice* with which Kate Claxton followed *The Two Orphans*, and *Storm-Beaten*. The great raft scene in *The World* was a crackerjack and "Davy Crockett" thrusting his arm through the hasps of the cabin door is a classic, as is also Eliza Crossing the Ice in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. So were scenes in *The World Against Her*, *The Black Flag*, and *The Danger Signal*. Fascinating too, were the scenes from *The Sporting Duchess*, *The White Heather*, *The Fatal Card* and *The Power of the Press*, while the pictures of that first and best of "crook" plays, *Jim the Penman*, riveted the passer-by. The perennial Barnum came with the flowers that bloom in the spring and brought an art gallery to the small boy that not all the Metropolitans, Louvres and Salons can ever obliterate.

Among the more important plays produced is one to which I would call special attention, as it has unusual historic significance—that of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. It was played at the Herald Square Theatre, by Frank Mayo, also of *Davy Crockett* fame. The action of the play hinges upon an identification by means of the thumb prints of two persons, the scientific study of which had been Pudd'nhead's hobby. This identification brings his enemies to confusion, and the play to a triumphant close. Although Galton's thumb-print theory was not unknown to local criminologists, it was the striking exemplification of its use in this play that directed the special

attention of the New York police officials to it and led to its adoption by the department.

At the close of the play, Frank Mayo was called upon for a speech. He read the following dispatch from Mark Twain: "Cable me the jury's verdict." The audience cried in answer, "A success."

A long time after Al Woods, one of the highlights in the 'gos, had become a prominent figure on Broadway, he still clung to some of his old Bowery customs. One of these was to sit in a wooden chair tilted back against the wall and sink a wicked wad of Virgin Leaf back of his tongue and shout "'lo Sam," "'lo Bill," "How do, Mis' Smith," to the passing throngs. The atmosphere of a general country store has always been like a letter from home to Al, and the big thing he misses in this crowded city of ours is the smell of the old livery stable with the little sign of T. J. Smith, Veterinary, in the window. Anyone can get a rise out of Al by making a noise like a tree toad and handing him a bunch of pussy willows. And if you can smell like a load of new-mown hay, he is yours for life.

The New York stage in the 'gos was a glittering spectacle. Many of us think it was then at the highest point of its artistic and cultural life. Certainly, the men who directed it were less commercial than their immediate successors. That Daly and Frohman died practically penniless was no reflection on their artistic abilities, no matter how much of a reproach it may have been to their business side. The blood of the martyr is the seed of the church; and in the sacrifices demanded of these managers, succeeding generations reaped the benefit. The Stage as a whole was immensely enriched by their efforts.

A whole chapter in these memoirs might be given to Mrs. Fiske alone; there is a colorful figure if ever there was one. For some fool reason or other she never was seen often

enough in New York. Yet as Woolcott says: "It is pleasant to know that she passed this way."

Then again there are a lot of delightful personages whom we would all like to see take one more curtain call. Ada Rehan, Maude Adams, Margaret Illington, Blanche Bates, Lillian Russell, Edna May, Maxine Elliot, Mary Mannering, Edith Kingdon, Viola Allen, Maud Brunscombe, Fanny Ward, Virginia Harned, Annie Russell, Fanny Davenport, Frankie Bailey, May Irwin, Rose Coghlan, Fay Templeton, Mrs. Leslie Carter, Mrs. Whiffen, Mrs. Gilbert, Mrs. John Drew, Kate Claxton, Clara Morris, Ellen Terry, Mary Anderson and a heavenly host of others. What a glorious galaxy they would make spread across the stage!

With them should be John Drew, Jimmie Lewis, John Gilbert, Maurice Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Sydney Herbert, Frederick de Belleville, Kyrle Bellew, John McCullough, C. W. Couldock, Lester Wallack, Frank S. Chanfrau, W. H. Crane, C. E. Robson, Ed. Harrigan, Tony Hart, Johnny Wilde, E. M. Holland, Sidney Drew, James K. Hackett, Walker Whiteside, Richard Mansfield, William Faversham, Augustus Thomas, Walter Hampden, Henry Irving, Lew Fields, Joe Weber, Pete Daly, Wilton Lackaye, Henry E. Dixey, De Wolf Hopper, George M. Cohan, Honey Boy Evans, George Primrose, Billy West, the four Mortons, the four Cohans, Eva Tanguay, Jim and Bonnie Thornton, Willie Collier, Williams and Walker, Eddie Foy, and Murphy and Nichols, whose skit called *From Zaza to Uncle Tom* would still bring out the S. R. O. sign at any vaudeville theater, if they could be lured from retirement to play it once again.

Musical comedy was high in public favor in the '90s. The spectacular success of *The Belle of New York* with Edna May; *Florodora* with its now historic sextet; *The Geisha*; De Wolf Hopper's *Wang* with Della Fox and her famous curl; *La Poupee*, which owed its long run to Anna Held's

much imitated song, "I Just Can't Make My Eyes Behave," these and many other tuneful and eye-filling musical shows not only created new stellar favorites but unloosed upon the Broadway night life a host of chorus beauties who, with their proud escorts, graced the tables of Rector's, Martin's and Shanley's for the after-theater supper without which no self-respecting male would think of winding up an evening at the play.

The Casino was also the birthplace of *The Belle of New York*, which was the first American Musical Comedy to make a hit abroad. This amusing farrago was also the making of Edna May, whose demure Salvation Army lassie so captured the British aristocracy that Miss May became a figure in Mayfair drawing-rooms. *The Belle of New York* was Miss May's outstanding theatrical success, and after a few later ventures on the stage, she retired to private life in London.

The Casino girls of this time had no little success in the eligible "catches" they made in the enhanced glamour of the footlights. The *Florodora* sextet became the shining example of what the \$15 a week chorus-girl could accomplish when she set her mind to it, as common report had it that they had all been allied to a corresponding sextet of honest-to-goodness millionaires—not the stage kind. One of the notables among this class of Casino girls was Mabelle Gilman Corey, who took into camp no less a personage than William E. Corey. This little excursion, however, cost him his job as president of the United States Steel Corporation, and eventually Mabelle herself gave him the blue envelope.

Years ago, tableaux were a staple form of public amusement, not to speak of their private employment as "parlor entertainments." All the "moral shows" of all the ages leading up to the "Age of Innocence" had them. Then art struck the old Bowery, and the cellar "free and easies" of old Broadway and the tableaux assumed a wider latitude; in fact, so wide that the "leatherheads" (now "cops") used to make

periodical descents on them, very much in the same manner as they do today with reference to the unabashed drama, proving that things haven't changed so much, after all. The tableaux were part of all the old calcium-lit spectacles and burlesques, and brought down the curtain amid tumultuous applause.

Finally, this naïve entertainment passed out with the Crystal Palace school of art and the *Black Crook* coryphees, and for many a long day the motionless human figure was unknown to the stage. The 'gos, however, saw a recrudescence, or rather a variation of it in the "Living Pictures," which, after creating some stir abroad, came to New York to advance local education in art. The Living Pictures were simply more or less faithful reproductions of celebrated paintings and sculptures by the human model. They were represented in a gilt frame under a powerful light behind a red plush curtain, which was closed to afford the necessary changes.

Some of the pictures were very like the originals, others required imagination. "Paul and Virginia" flying from the storm were quite good if they were not kept too long standing each on one leg. The "Dying Gladiator" was often the victim of a conqueror who lacked biceps, and there were other lapses from strict realism observable to the captious. The reproductions of the nude were prime favorites in an age that considered "flesh-colored" tights the very minimum of public attire, although most of the "Venuses" and the "Springs" and "Summers" were generally wanting in that desirable pulchritude necessary to classical allegory.

In Europe these pictures were presented without the protection of even flesh-colored tights, and persistent rumors were kept in circulation that the same idea would be followed here. But that old "Roundsmen of the Lord," Anthony Comstock, was on the alert, and such an exhibition would have been pie for him. Enough was attempted, however, to

create tremendous interest in the scheme, with the gratifying result of crowded houses at every performance.

When an exhibition of classic statuary was held in Cincinnati at about the time Living Pictures were rampant, the good ladies of that virtuous town decided that it would only be a wise precaution to have all the figures draped in clothing before the young people were admitted. Powers' Greek Slave was accordingly arrayed in a dainty little calico blouse and a pair of canton flannel drawers reaching, as was then fashionable, to her ankles. The others were tastefully arrayed in panties of dotted swiss, dimities and other popular fabrics of the hour.

The plague of Little Lord Fauntleroy at this time was something of stupendous proportions, and besides Wallace Eddinger, many another boy inwardly swore at his doting mama who rigged him up in the now well-known costume immortalized by Reginald Birch in his famous illustrations of Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett's story then running serially in *St. Nicholas*. While it would not be true to say that Mrs. Burnett's story could not have scored the success it did without them, here was one case at least where the illustrations really helped and Birch's interpretation of the Little Lord became second in popularity only to the story itself. A whole generation of boys would have been glad to see Birch hung, drawn and quartered. The "Little Lord Fauntleroy" suit, with its insipid sash and wide "sissy" collar, peered from every shop window in the land and the streets were filled with quondam Fauntleroyes.

CHAPTER XIV

New York Sings Hymns

IT WILL, no doubt, in view of what I have just written, seem strange to my readers to think that a very pleasant Sunday evening was often spent by us in singing the hymns of Fanny Crosby, accompanied by a venerable Mason & Hamlin organ. This very remarkable woman was a pupil and then a teacher for many, many years in our New York Institute for the Blind. At the early age of six months, she lost her sight entirely and lived for nearly a century in total darkness. Such was the spirit, however, of this wonderful woman, that she refused to be cast down by her heavy misfortune and all through life maintained a smiling attitude that was the marvel and the admiration of her millions of friends. For there was no home in this whole land from Maine to California, there was no church, no Sunday School, no religious gathering of any kind, that did not, as part of their proceedings, sing some of the beautiful hymns written by Fanny Crosby.

During her period as a teacher, for in addition to her physical affliction, the problem of earning her own living was also to be faced, Miss Crosby found a willing helper in one of the half-grown boys in the office. This particular lad took infinite pains to be of as much use to the handicapped teacher as he could. She would scribble her verses on fugitive scraps of paper and he would immediately copy them in a neat copyplate hand and file them carefully for future reference. In a hundred little ways he sought to lighten her burdens

wherever possible. The friendship thus formed lasted throughout their lives.

The boy's name was Grover Cleveland. And in later years when Miss Crosby visited Washington, the business of the mightiest Government on earth ceased, while the President himself put his strong arms around the frail body of his old teacher and gently guided her faltering footsteps to a comfortable chair next his desk.

When our great Union General was laid to rest on Riverside Drive, Gilmore's great band of five hundred pieces played Miss Crosby's hymn, "Safe In the Arms of Jesus," as the body was lowered into the vault. I stood with that immense throng that afternoon in the woods that then faced the Hudson. And I shall never forget the solemn hush that spread over that huge gathering as the last notes of Fanny Crosby's beautiful hymn died in the gathering dusk, and we realized that our Great Warrior was at last at peace.

She was fortunate in having as an associate teacher in the Institute, another interesting figure, George F. Root, whose gift as a composer translated Miss Crosby's poems into imperishable music. Miss Crosby wrote more than three thousand hymns, a prodigious accomplishment. Many of them retain their popularity to this day and some seem likely to become immortal. I shall mention but a few, though many others will naturally suggest themselves to those who lived through the religious revivals of Moody and Sankey's time, in which the hymns of Fanny Crosby played so important a part.

In emotional appeal and soul-satisfying content, I would probably place in the first rank, "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour," though some prefer, "Saviour, More Than Life to Me." Yet "Lord, at Thy Mercy Seat, Humbly I Fall" and "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross" are prime favorites of many.

She wrote one hymn which did much to arouse interest in missionary work and which became the favorite farewell

hymn of those about to leave for foreign shores and which was sung at hundreds of departures as the missionaries set out upon their noble errands. It had a snap and a go to it that was indescribable:—

Speed away, speed away on your mission of light
To the lands that are lying in darkness and night,
Take your lives in your hands, to the work while 'tis day;
Speed away! Speed away! Speed away!

Most of us knew Miss Crosby's hymns by heart and there was never any diffidence or reluctance to give them a hearty rendering.

These Sunday evenings, with their simple hymn singing, were not at all an unusual or novel occurrence. There was a wave of religious revival all over the country at that time and the work of the evangelist was a prominent topic of general conversation. Some of the principal singers at these revival meetings enjoyed great popularity. Ira D. Sankey was one of them and Philip Phillips another.

Philip Phillips was induced to give up everything and adopt the calling of a gospel singer as a result of his experience in singing "Your Mission" before President Lincoln during a meeting in the Senate Chambers of a distinguished group of soldiers and civilians during the Civil War. The meeting was under the auspices of the United States Christian Commission, an organization for the care of sick and disabled soldiers. The climax is reached in the fifth stanza:

If you cannot in the conflict
Prove yourself a soldier true,
If, where fire and smoke are thickest
There's no work for you to do,
When the battlefield is silent
You can go with careful tread,
You can bear away the wounded,
You can cover up the dead.

Through the example of Mr. Phillips, Mr. Sankey was also induced to give up his business as a revenue officer and devote his life to the ministry of sacred song. All this can be traced to the influence of Mrs. Gates, who composed the music of Miss Crosby's famous missionary hymn.

Mrs. Gates (Ellen M. Huntington) was the youngest sister of Collis P. Huntington, the builder of the first great trans-continental railway and an aunt of Archer M. Huntington, who has given New York the beautiful Hispanic Museum at Broadway and One Hundred and Fifty-eighth Street and whose timely contribution to the Museum of the City of New York at the first meeting held in the office of James Speyer the banker, did much to lift the idea out of the welter of doubt and uncertainty which always surrounds a new project.

Undoubtedly, the exquisite literary quality of each was inspired and would have insured them high and permanent place in hymnology in any event, but their extraordinary vogue could never have been achieved but for the singular beauty of the tunes to which they were finally united, almost a century after they had been written.

Mr. Beecher was an enthusiastic admirer of "Abide With Me" and included three verses of it in a collection of hymns in his Plymouth collection, but *without any music*. When it was decided to include it in a new compilation, it was suddenly realized that there was no tune for "Hymn 27," as it was called. It had no name. The editor of the proposed compilation, Dr. Monk, thereupon set to work on the spur of the moment and produced in ten minutes the tune that ever after carried "Hymn 27" to the uttermost parts of the earth. Millions of people now sing these familiar verses, and I am glad to say I can still hear them as frequently as I did fifty years ago.

Only recently at a great spectacular show in England, I was amazed and, at the same time deeply moved, to hear the loud speaker suddenly boom forth the opening bars of this

beautiful hymn. Sixty thousand persons immediately rose and joined in the singing. The English are certainly a queer people. The entertainment was secular in the extreme. It portrayed the British Empire in its most militant mood, with pageants depicting her great warriors and conquerors—Nelson, Wellington, Kitchener, Roberts, etc. The floodlights were suddenly darkened. Kipling's "Recessional" came from the microphone, to be followed by "Abide With Me." It did not seem in the least incongruous, though it had that appearance now that I write about it away from the influence of the brilliant pageant I had just witnessed.

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide:
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Queer, lovely people, those English. It is a pleasant land to live in.

Strange as it may appear, two of these beautiful hymns owe their tremendous popularity largely to old New York—"Abide With Me" and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." Both have the same singular experience. While written in England, each had to wait for American music to endow them with the immortality which is now theirs.

Simeon B. Marsh, a choir leader in the central part of our State, became leader of a choir in the Presbyterian Church at Amsterdam, and during a walk one morning jotted down on a piece of paper the notes of some music that persistently occurred to him. Years afterwards, his great friend Dr. Thomas Hastings, of the Presbyterian Church on Bleeker Street, thought that the tune was much better adapted to the great hymn of Charles Wesley than to the verses which Mr. Marsh had composed. So he sought and obtained permission to make the change, Mr. Marsh sending him a copy of the original score with his name inscribed as a friendly greeting.

The adoption of "Martyn" as Mr. Marsh called his tune, had an immediate effect on the popularity of Wesley's hymn. Gilmore, at the Peace Jubilee in Boston, selected it as a representative American tune and invited Mr. Marsh to hear it, which he did.

It is, indeed, pleasant to know that old New York, in spite of its world-wide reputation for wickedness, cynicism and general ungodliness, has, nevertheless, thus given the Devil two good cracks that he is not apt to forget in a hurry.

These hymns and dozens of other old stand-bys were known and sung in almost all the houses I visited, and provided many a pleasant Sunday evening for young and old.

I might also add to this list of songsters, the name of another New Yorker who wrote what, I think, is conceded to be by far the most popular song ever written in the English—or for that matter—any other language—"Home, Sweet Home." That is the work of John Howard Payne, who first saw the light of day when our city was still in its cradle days and practically unknown to the outside world. He was not born in Boston, as was stated on the inscription which for many years stood over his grave in Tunis.

The little home to which he was removed after his birth in New York and where he spent a good part of his boyhood, still stands in old East Hampton. Thus the lad, though brought up in the city, had authentic early associations with a "lowly cottage" and with "birds singing gayly that came at his call."

It was recently owned by Mr. Gustavus Buck, an old-time partner of Peter Marie's, in the lithograph business in this town and who had enough sentiment to repair it and bring it back to its former glory. Hundreds of golfers drive past it on the way to the links every day in summer, but few know that the modest little farmhouse is the boyhood home of the author of "Home, Sweet Home."

Payne did not live a life of disappointment, penury and

toil, as so many writers tell us. He was undoubtedly a disappointed man in at least one respect. He wooed and lost Mary Shelley, widow of the poet, who was in love with his whimsical and fascinating friend, Washington Irving.

Even in the world of musical comedy, generally regarded as the stronghold of the Devil's cohorts, the church has been able to capture another effective ally. Few song hits in the history of this attractive field of vocalism have ever equaled the popularity of "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" written by Sir Arthur Sullivan, composer of *The Mikado*, *Pinafore*, and a dozen other seductive wiles of Satan, as the churchgoers of my day described the theater.

When Kitchener received a telegram from a chaplain who thought peace would soon be declared between the Boers and the British, stating: "I am Acting Chaplain and shall conduct divine service in several camps tomorrow. May I ask if 'Peace, Perfect Peace' would be a most appropriate hymn to sing?" Kitchener answered "Please yourself, but I think 'Onward, Christian Soldiers' quite as good."

CHAPTER XV

Fearless Newspaper Men

OF THE great editors who were then prominent in New York Mr. Dana of the *Sun* probably headed the list for individual ability. George Jones, after his terrific contest with the Tweed ring, had practically retired to a well-earned rest. James Gordon Bennett was dead. Horace Greeley was dead. Whitelaw Reid was coming into prominence as the Young Editor of the Tall Tower, as Mr. Dana facetiously described him, alluding to the new building erected by the *Tribune* which completely dwarfed and darkened the decrepit quarters of the *Sun*. Edwin L. Godkin held forth with Horace White in Hamilton's old paper, the *Evening Post*. The *Commercial Advertiser*, under Hugh Hastings, was a nonentity except for a brief period when Lincoln Steffens essayed to breathe new life into the moribund corpse. George William Curtis, the impeccable, of *Harper's Weekly*, should also be mentioned. The *Weekly*, under Mr. Curtis, wielded a tremendous political influence, but the beginning of the end was in sight for this particular class of journal owing to the recent invention of a process by which news events could be illustrated and printed simultaneously.

Mr. Dana was the *enfant terrible* of the Press, and in the gentle art of making enemies could excel even the justly celebrated James M'Neill Whistler himself. All the editors were given to polite adulation of each other and their pretty compliments added to the gayety of nations. In this renowned sport, Mr. Dana, like Abou Ben Adhem, led all the rest. One

bottle on his desk was filled with ink and another with the milk of human kindness. One was always empty and the other overflowed. To illustrate.

"If any person supposes that the revelation of what White-law Reid wrote to Blaine against Roscoe Conkling, can add a pang to the reminiscences of that great stalwart, he is doubtless mistaken. Does the lion care when he is told that amid the hurly burly assaults of many base animals he was also kicked by an ass without knowing it?"

A trifle turgid but understandable.

In addition to settling the affairs of the nation and of the universe, when necessary, the intellectual resources of the *Sun* were also occasionally employed to solve some of the surplus social problems that presented themselves from time to time as in the mooted question concerning table napkins. Should the guest fold them up after using them or should he nonchalantly abandon them to their fate? There was no Emily Post in those days to tell you what was wrong with this picture.

Mr. Laffan was known to be a high authority on Ancient Ceramics and Oriental pottery. The question therefore was referred to him and decided in favor of leaving the napkin unfolded. "Thus," explained the naïve Mr. Laffan, "paying your hostess the delicate compliment of knowing that she didn't care how much her wet wash cost."

At that time, our Navy was in swaddling clothes and a prolific source of scandal were the curious circumstances surrounding the awarding of construction contracts. I was one of the so-called "bright young men" of the *Sun* who penned the alleged letters highly commending (?) the Navy on every occasion. A collision in the Bay between the U. S. S. *Ajax* and the old Dominion liner, the *Guyandotte*, whereby a hole was stove in the bow of the *Ajax*, would produce an imaginary communication like this addressed to the Secretary of the Navy:

My dear Robeson.

I see by the papers that the *Ajax* has run into the *Guyandotte*, has had a hole stove in her bow, and is now useless.

Not at all, Sir. All you've got to do is to hunt up that hole—it must be floating around the bay somewhere—and have it towed over to our yards. I will build a new ship around it.

Sincerely yours,
John Roach

Dana would chuckle as he put a head on it—"An Intercepted Letter." I had a narrow escape from joining the immortals of the *Sun* permanently.

The *Tribune* thoughtlessly uncovered a hitherto unsuspected gusher of vituperation when it rented one of its street stores to a lager beer saloon, as we called them in those days. The lessees were Koster & Bial, who were later to shine as promoters of the great Carmencita, the Spanish dancer, and to revel in a green or "cork" room in their Thirty-fourth Street establishment, which was a veritable sensation in the theatrical world. As Greeley was nationally known as a vehement teetotaler, Mr. Dana had a slightly justifiable basis for his attack. And he reveled in the opportunity.

Beecher, Cleveland, Grant, Hayes and half a dozen others were included in his violent love-making. I often wondered why one of them didn't cane him.

When Cleveland died, the *Sun* had a long leading article, highly eulogistic of the man it had once pilloried as hiding behind his wife's skirts to escape merited punishment for some offense or other, and ended with a paragraph to the effect that all unhappy differences with the ex-President had long ago been pleasantly adjusted.

I always thought Mr. Mitchell wrote that wind-up.

Enterprise in journalism had slumbered since the death of the elder Bennett. No one of them was trying to steal the other's circulation. Peace and quiet reigned everywhere. Serene in the knowledge that their properties were amply pro-

tected from outside competition by their possession of a monopolistic franchise in the Associated Press, they were like a lot of sleek, well-fed tabby cats warming themselves before a kitchen fire. Self-approbation and contentment were so thick you could cut them with a knife.

And then the right honorable Joseph Pulitzer of St. Louis meandered into the room and looked around.

A diamond-studded belt on the waist of Mr. Dana attracted his attention. "A Million a Week," it read, in glittering letters. He promptly removed Mr. Dana from the warmest and most comfortable position near the fire and sat down in it himself. The others looked askance, but said nothing. Mr. Dana wrote a piece in his paper next morning, entitled "Move On, Joe" which was creditably written. Joe pretended not to hear; he only crept closer to the fire.

The door opened and the wind blew in a young, good-looking cat. This time from California. The newcomer decided at once that he wanted the choice place preempted by Pulitzer. He arched his back, hoisted his tail, gave a warning s-s-sp-i-tt and proceeded to dig his claws into the thick fur of Pulitzer. It was a most unseemly gesture and brought forth loud expressions of disgust from the others who abhorred scenes of violence and bewailed such lack of good form. They tried to excuse it on the ground that he was an untutored prospector from the wild and woolly West. "Back to the Mines," they cried, but Hearst only grinned. Besides he was very busy at that moment. Pulitzer was defending himself. The police appeared and haled the two malefactors to court. Before the judge, Hearst admitted that the scrap had cost him over eight million dollars. Pulitzer, who hated to lose money, could not even articulate. Someone stole Dana's beautiful "Million a Week" belt during the mêlée, and he never found it again. Pulitzer finally vanished, leaving three kittens to take his place. The Black Cat made one mouthful of the three.

It is doubtful if there ever was a more picturesque, bizarre and eccentric genius in journalism than Pulitzer. A story was once current that when he first arrived from Hungary a penniless immigrant, he sought shelter one night from the bitter cold in the corridor of French's Hotel, then on the site of the present *World* building. No doubt, he presented a rather depressing sight as he huddled up against the grateful warmth of the steam radiator. The contrast between the shivering derelict and the comfortable well-fed patrons of the hotel was doubtless disconcerting. So the porter was ordered to chase the boy out. It was said that the young immigrant then and there resolved that some day he would have money enough to own a big building and when that time came he would pull down French's Hotel and erect in its place a structure that would be of some use to the world at large and not merely a refuge for the plutocrat.

Be that as it may, this dream came true. And French's Hotel was pulled down and the new *World* building with a brilliant, glittering, gold dome erected in its place. This burnished blazing sky piece catches the rays of the rising sun and glows in its effulgence all day long.

Regarding his paper, he was noisy, vociferous and tumultuous all the time. He shouted the praises of the *World* weekdays, Sundays and holidays. His want ads were numberless; his circulation was tremendous; his zeal for the dear people was overwhelming. You couldn't see the forest for the trees.

Yet he put out a surprisingly good paper. He also knew a good thing when he saw it. One day a young artist shyly dropped a package of pen and ink drawings in the office and hastily disappeared. They were "take-offs" on the news of the day—cartoons, they call them now. That young man might have taken them to every newspaper office in the country and never heard from them again. But Fate guided him aright, and Pulitzer hired Walt MacDougall to do just the kind of work he wanted to do. A drawing of his, "Belchazzar's

Feast"—apropos of a dinner given by millionaires to Blaine during the 1884 campaign—was given a prominent place on the front page—thus showing Pulitzer's unerring instinct for news-values—created a sensation and was deadly in its effect on Blaine's aspirations. MacDougall continued to be a headliner with Pulitzer for many years.

Pulitzer had now gained enormous wealth. He had everything life had to offer except one trifling detail—health. In his struggle for fame and fortune, he never spared himself. He simply knew no limits to his own capacity. He labored all the time. So he began to break down. First his eyes, then his nerves. And soon his beloved newspaper office, dearer almost to him than life itself—was to know him no more.

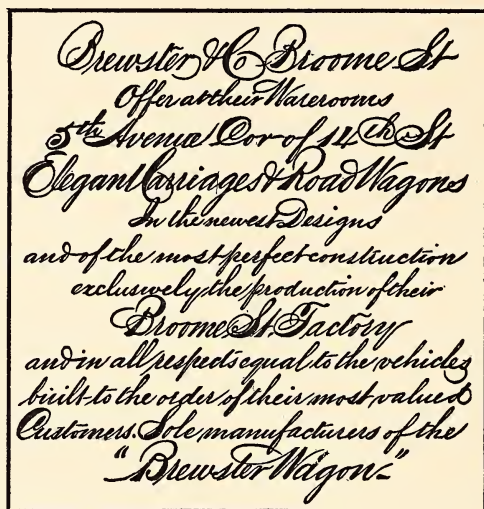
There is something indescribably sad in the cruel fate that overwhelmed so brilliant a soul. At the very pinnacle of fame, the fruit of his labor was snatched from him. In a very literal sense, he was Midas reincarnated. Everything he touched turned to gold. And of all the metals known to man, gold in itself is the most worthless. So it could not buy him eyesight; it could not buy him sleep. It enabled him to purchase the means to search the world for these elusive attributes—but all in vain.

After his home in New York was built, a hidden stream appeared. The water had to be diverted by a small steam engine. The throb of this little motor racked his worn frame. A sound-proof room had to be built in the small space reserved for sunlight and air. In his magnificent estate in Bar Harbor, the moan of the surf at the foot of his castle drove him frantic and a huge tower was built of such massive strength that it kept out everything—moans, light, air—and peace.

A great yacht was built and its mighty engines were stilled when the owner wished to walk on deck. He would have quieted the waves, but the waves were not on the pay roll of the *World* and they refused to be stilled. The turbulence

of the ocean was like the turbulence of his own soul, and perhaps that gave him solace.

Surrounded by doctors and nurses, secretaries and cablegrams, the great editor passed the remnant of his life. He deserved a better fate. There was much that was kindly, much that was lovable, behind that bristling red beard and



Old quality advertising.

those steely eyes. He meant to be, and has been, of service to mankind. But the monument he reared to his memory crumbled to dust in the hands of his heirs and assigns. *Requiescat in pace.*

Hearst, his one and only rival, came of good stock. He was the son of George Hearst, an Argonaut, and United States Senator from California. He was one of the few fortunate gold seekers and amassed a huge fortune from the celebrated Comstock Mine, one lode of which yielded the enormous sum of seven hundred millions and made a dozen multimillionaires.

Young William R., his only surviving son, had just graduated from Harvard. Offered his choice of ranching or mining, he surprised his father by deciding in favor of publishing. As a political expedient, the elder Hearst had purchased the *San Francisco Examiner*. This the son chose as the starting point for his career. He made a success of it and decided to enter a larger field. And this led him to New York.

His appearance in the great metropolis caused no great excitement—at first. It was merely a millionaire's son come to dissipate some of papa's money. His advent was looked upon more as a shower of manna from Heaven for needy journalists, than what it really turned out to be—an epoch-making event in the publishing world.

He did not achieve his present eminence merely as a result of countless financial resources. He is at present one of the world's great publishers, owning more newspapers, periodicals and magazines than any other single individual. Out of them he derives an income almost beyond belief and he is constantly expanding. His public benefactions have been many, but are rarely recorded. One I think of particular value is the purchase of the entire site of the little town of New Salem in Illinois where Lincoln spent the years of his very early manhood, and where he met Anne Rutledge. As a surveyor, Lincoln laid out almost the entire town and many of the markers now there are his handiwork. As a place of interest in a study of Lincoln's life, this little spot is unique. It had reverted to pasture land when Mr. Hearst saw it. After its purchase, he presented the land to the State of Illinois as a site for a public park. A society has since been formed for the purpose of restoring the vanished village, and now many of the old buildings have been erected, especially the grocery store where the firm of Lincoln & Berry held forth, the cabin of Jack and Hannah Armstrong, and the tavern where dwelt Anne Rutledge. It is a public benefaction of great value and interest, and well worth a visit when you motor out that way.

Mr. Hearst is also a prominent figure in the production of moving pictures. He resides on a huge ranch in California a large part of his time, but has several other homes and a whole medieval castle in Wales. His young sons are now grown up and take part in the management of the vast business.

Among the men who joined Hearst at the outset of his career and have achieved both fame and fortune, Mr. Arthur Brisbane is probably the best known. He received his earliest training under the redoubtable Dana of the *Sun* and from him passed to Pulitzer. He was in receipt of an income of \$15,000 from the latter, when for reasons best known to himself he decided to transfer his affections to Hearst, although the latter did not then have an opening of the same pecuniary value. Brisbane started at about half the sum—\$8,000—but for many years his income has been placed at considerably over one hundred thousand dollars. He is the highest-paid journalist at large.

His peculiar style of writing has had many imitators, but few possess the erudition, the wide background of reading and philosophy which are the distinguishing features of his writing. It is entirely within reason to say that more persons read his editorials every day than of all other newspaper writers together. They possess a quality that makes a unique appeal, and Mr. Brisbane enjoys the distinction of never having written for a paper that did not at once grow in circulation.

At about this time the great *New York Times*, its owner being dead, was for sale. It was purchased by the late Mr. Adolph Ochs, who hailed from Chattanooga, Tennessee, where he had a small paper. The *Times* was sadly run down at the time of his purchase, and the eyes of the reading public were largely upon the acrobatic doings of Pulitzer and Hearst. So the appearance of Mr. Ochs and the significance of his advent passed without notice.

Mr. Ochs proceeded quietly about the business of rebuilding the ruined *Times*. Despite the noise of the captains and the shouting, he took no part in the squabbles of his contemporaries. His task was to make the *Times* the organ of a less hectic constituency than were attracted by the yellow journals. Mr. Jones had left a great reputation and a tradition that was a valuable asset in the hands of the right successor. And Mr. Ochs proved to be the one. He early flew his banner, "All the news that's fit to print," and soon after reduced the price of his paper to the modest sum of one cent. A vast army of readers, wearied unto death with the shriekings and fireworks of middle Park Row, welcomed the tranquillity and repose of the *Times*, and soon its circulation grew with seven-league strides. The *Sunday Times*, under Jones, had achieved a high rank as a literary production—its articles by Drysdale and others were charming essays in delightful English—and Mr. Ochs proceeded to enlarge and enhance the literary atmosphere of his paper. Except for the Sunday edition, illustrations formed no part of his plan except where they applied directly to a news article and then mostly portraits. He eschewed the comic cartoon entirely. He ignored everything except the news.

He early became a staunch supporter of every scientific effort that seemed to promise a betterment of conditions of mankind. Consequently, large sections of the paper were given up to Aviation, Exploration, Inventions and other events which he judged to be epoch-making. Mr. Jones, having imparted an independent character in politics to its editorial page, after years of slavish adherence to the Republican Party, the same policy was pursued by Mr. Ochs. It seemed to be a change in keeping with more enlightened public opinion. The great masses of the people were no longer willing to have their thinking done by one man, as in the case of Greeley. And this policy seems to be the right one. It is no party organ of any faction. It treats political

news very much after the fashion of everyday news and seems not insistent on your believing as the *Times* believes, if you do not happen to agree.

Some reference to *The Evening Post* those days might be in order. It was an anomaly of its kind. It was the organ of the plutocrat and famed for its financial news, and at the same time was Tammany's most dreaded foe. It was then edited by two of the best men in the profession, Horace White and Edwin L. Godkin. White had reported the debates between Lincoln and Douglas for the *Chicago Tribune*, and his occasional contributions to *Lincolnia* were unique and valuable.

It was a newspaper of this scholarly type that Mr. Godkin served as editor. And of all the castigations that Tammany received, there were none to compare with the lashings that they received at the hands of Godkin. The man was fearless. I often wonder how he escaped with his life. Probably his prominence was all that saved him. They arrested him once and kept him locked up all night. Of course, in the morning, bail was easily secured.

There was no doubt that under Godkin, the *Post* was a scourge to the saloon keepers and heelers that dominated membership in our Board of Aldermen at the time. He was a staunch upholder of the newly created Civil Service Commission and his work was effective and constructive. He was truly a great journalist and his passing away left an unfillable void.

The marvelous Mr. Cyrus Curtis of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, the *Saturday Evening Post* and a string of other publications, bought Hamilton's paper and a new era was opened up for the *Post*. Now it has passed into other hands and is edited to catch the popular public.

The *Herald* editorially never had much prestige; but as a newsgatherer it was supreme. And it had a unique department in its maritime service and in its Paris edition. This

marine department was exclusively devoted to Shipping News, and word of the movement of nearly every ship at sea was faithfully portrayed the next morning in its columns. It seemed to have a much more personal interest for its readers than the same news has today. But in those days we had no wireless, no radio, and the world's commerce was still largely carried on by sailing ships. So the movements of these vessels were of vital concern to many persons and the item in the *Herald* was often all that was heard for months. This column spread the fame of the *Herald* from Singapore to Calcutta and from Liverpool to the uttermost corners of the Seven Seas. It contributed immensely to the prestige of the *Herald* and so this paper in the world's estimation was practically the only journal printed in North America.

Whitelaw Reid, successor to Horace Greeley as editor of the *Tribune*, won his journalistic spurs as a correspondent in the field during the Civil War with Dana. He was a man of rare executive ability, as well as a man of letters and of exceptional business capacity. Realizing the plight of the *Tribune* brought about by Greeley's eccentric attitude immediately following the close of the war, he secured sufficient capital to purchase control of the paper, and after Greeley's death assumed entire management editorially and otherwise. He was the first publisher to install a typesetting machine, and he early became financially interested in the Mergenthaler invention for this purpose. He was high in the councils of the Republican Party for a third of a century, and under his administration the *Tribune* prospered. He married a daughter of D. O. Mills who, like Senator Hearst, was one of the original Comstock Mine owners. He subsequently became Ambassador to England, a post which he filled with distinction. He died in London and his body was returned to New York aboard a U. S. warship escorted by British cruisers—an unprecedented honor. His son, Ogden Mills Reid, now conducts the *Tribune*.

The advent of the Tabloids and the ultimate effect it will have on journalism yet remains to be seen. The idea is an English one, being the development of an insignificant paper in London devoted to sports. The late Lord Northcliffe was much intrigued by the idea. During a visit to New York he was invited to produce his conception of a daily paper of this diminutive size and Mr. Pulitzer placed the *World* at his disposal for the experiment. It was an amusing incident in the travels of his lordship, but it produced no particular impression. About the only tangible result of the effort was the acquisition by Northcliffe of one of Pulitzer's most able lieutenants who had been of great help to him. Instead of feeling complimented by this additional approbation of his skill in picking clever associates, Mr. Pulitzer, probably recalling Mr. Hearst's enthusiasm in the same direction, took umbrage at it and the cordial relations heretofore existing between "J. P." and a peer of the realm suddenly acquired an icy frigidity which was never dispelled.

I first met Northcliffe in London. Motor cars were then a new thing but he had the latest and best French model. We toured through part of the Lake Country and spent a memorable day at Bath where he showed me the haunts of Beau Nash and the homes of many of England's fashionables when Bath was her great resort.

During the trip to Bath, Northcliffe was emulating one of Pulitzer's pet circulation schemes; that was, making a great fuss about some criminal sentenced to pay the just penalty of his crimes. Some such cases possessed the necessary qualities for an increase of circulation in certain directions. Strenuous efforts would accordingly be made to interfere with the orderly procedure of justice accompanied by loud railings on the part of J. P. whose heart was bleeding for the penniless malefactor who would never have been so harshly condemned had he been a wealthy transgressor, etc., etc., etc.

In Northcliffe's case it was a woman guilty of an atrocious

murder, who had been condemned to death. The time of execution was only a few hours distant, and all day emissaries from the *Daily Mail* had besieged the office of the Home Secretary for a reprieve, the Circulation Department meanwhile deluging London with Extras every half hour. At each of the quaint old English Inns at which we stopped for lunch and tea, a bundle of telegrams would await Northcliffe's arrival. At intervals, couriers would even overtake us on the road. The news was not encouraging.

When the guests assembled for dinner, a wire came in announcing that the Home Secretary had flatly declined to listen to any more remonstrances. Just as the dinner was ended, a final telegram arrived stating that the murderess had been hanged by the neck till she was dead.

Poor Northcliffe! The strain of the World War in which he played a great part, and a quarrel with Lloyd George brought him to an untimely end at the comparatively early age of fifty-five.

Don Seitz said he went crazy. Well, what if he did? Lots of people go crazy.

During his several visits to New York he always looked me up and my last breakfast with him was at Bolton Priory in Pelham where he stayed during a rather prolonged visit to New York during the War. He was an ardent Englishman and like Disraeli, an impassioned lover of the British Empire. I can well understand that sentiment in Rupert Brooke's poem when I think of Northcliffe:

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home. . . .

I am glad to know that a statue of him now stands on busy Fleet Street, the newspaper row of London, the scene of his labors. It is an inspiration to the craft of which he was so distinguished a member.

CHAPTER XVI

"Week-Ending" in the Early Days

THERE were no elaborate country estates to speak of and the present "week-end" visiting was not even thought of. There were, of course, a few estates along the Hudson closely modeled in the English manner; but in the sense that country life existed as it does today, there was none.

The precursor of all country clubs and week-end resorts in America was Tuxedo Park, a kind of aftermath of the Anglomaniac movement, which was such a source of amusement and diversion in the halcyon days, when the Saturday half-holiday was first timidly broached by the workaday world.

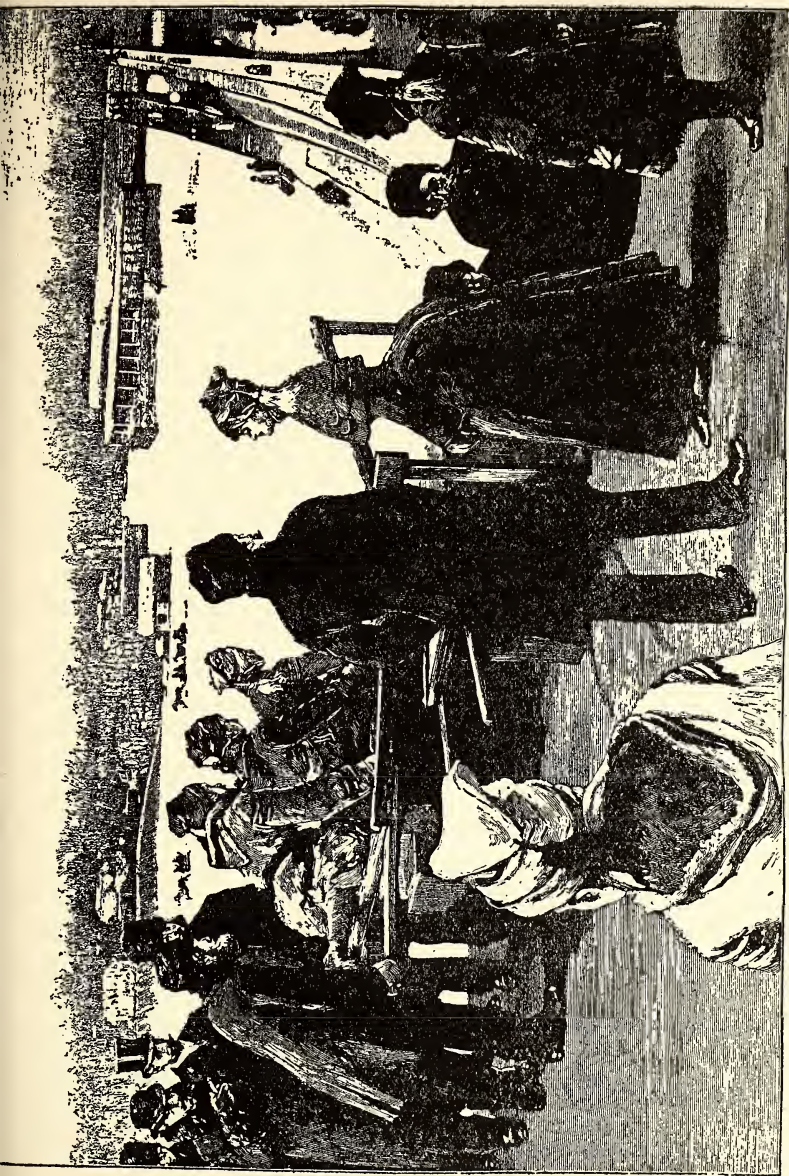
Tuxedo Park was founded by Pierre Lorillard who inherited 6000 acres of Orange County from his grandfather who was "up to snuff" in more ways than one. Mr. Lorillard formed a club, limited to the Brahmin class of New York society, and after three years of clearance converted a wilderness into a superb park, "the like of which," to quote an early contemporary, "does not exist on this continent, which half the English peerage might envy, and where the sale of building lots goes briskly on."

Arriving at the Keeper's Lodge, which in that pre-gasoline age "looked like a frontispiece to an English novel," one found "a liveried servant in charge of a little yellow buckboard and two satin-skinned, short-tailed brown ponies, and a mail phaeton with a big English horse waiting for the train." Passing the gate lodge in the autumn dusk, "the light

from a big log fire streams through the open door, and passengers see a gamekeeper in cords and leggings, with a pair of tall hounds on either side of him, standing near the blaze and gossiping with the lodge-keeper's wife."

The club house—on a Saturday evening in autumn—finds Lander's band in the big circular ballroom at the rear of the house. "There is a brown plush divan around the room between the windows, and a row of camp chairs where a *few chaperons* sit (*italics mine*), while slim girls in gauzy skirts and long corset-like silk bodices circle about in the arms of men whom an all-afternoon's tramp in the stubble after birds has not fatigued. There is a handsome stage at one end of the room with velvet curtains, scenery painted by Goatcher, and all the appurtenances for amateur acting. The room had often been crowded to see Mrs. James Brown Potter act, but since she deserted the amateur ranks there was no one to succeed her, and the curtain remains unlifted. There are traditions of Mrs. Potter all about the place. She was one of the earliest guests and cottagers here, and it was on the club paper she wrote that famous note of recommendation to a well-known complexion nostrum which created some excitement at the time. It was conceded to be a serious social error. She helped to make the place popular, engineered amateur theatricals, looked after the first great balls, invited influential people to stop with her, and wrote much matter out into the world on the club paper. . . . With the exception of Mrs. Potter, no actress has ever been the guest of the club." In winter, the stables were full of sleighs for the thirty miles of snowy roadway the Park afforded. There was also the famous Tuxedo toboggan slide, nearly a mile long, lit with electric lights with sleighs waiting at the lower end to carry riders to the top again.

Among the original cottagers at this de luxe retreat were William Waldorf Astor, Peter Cooper Hewitt, Grenville Kane, and Sir Roderick Cameron, sometime British Consul



When New York went tobogganing.

at New York, who had a shooting box in first class "moor" fashion and who only lacked salmon fishing to reproduce a Scotch holiday.

Mr. Lorillard, when he began building this unique experiment, sold out his famous racing stable, but later on returned to the turf, and at one time was considering the establishment of a race track in the Park. His investment in Tuxedo was over two million dollars. "Though the land sells at high prices," says a contemporary prophet, "he will never, of course, realize from his experiment any interest on his money. . . . This may seem an expensive luxury to the practical American mind, but though Mr. Lorillard may not, himself, get six per cent on his capital, his grandson, little Pierre, to whom the whole estate has been willed, with a life interest for his father, will be heir to a superb inheritance in the 'un-earned increment,' and it is only by such great ventures on the part of their ancestors that the estates of the English peers have been brought to their present conditions of splendor."

It was about this period, that the vogue of the horse as a social adjunct became one of the chief concerns of the smart set, as of course was befitting a close observance of British custom. Fox hunting was one of the attractions of Tuxedo, but there were also many hunting clubs on Long Island and elsewhere. The sound of the hunting horn emanated from such groups as The Rockaway Hunt Club, The Meadowbrook Hunt Club, The Country Club at Pelham, The Queens Country Hounds, and the Essex County Country Club. Theodore Roosevelt used to hunt with the Meadowbrooks, and other noted followers of the aniseed were Foxhall Keene, Frank Griswold, Robert Carter, Count Elliott Zborowski, Wright Sanford, Thomas Hitchcock, J. Burke Roche, William R. Travers, J. L. Kernochan, George Work, E. D. Morgan and Adolph Ladenburg.

Another exotic equine fashion of that day was tandem driving. The "horsey woman," as depicted in some of the



The Horse Show at Madison Square Garden, 1888.

cartoons of Gray Parker, Charles Dana Gibson, in her Melton box coat with big buttons, and her tip-tilted hat, also dates from this period. She, and her older sister, the tailor-made girl, began that vogue of masculine attire which, developing into the bicycle bloomer, startled the gay but still sedate '90s.

All this equine excitement had its "grand apotheosis," as the showmen say, in the Horse Show, that characteristic social function of the Peacock Alley period, in which horses claimed such attention as was never their lot before. Even work horses were "judged" in the good old fashion of the English "shires," and finally Gotham was treated yearly to a "work horse parade" on Fifth Avenue, which continued until a comparatively recent period. Mrs. James Speyer offered a prize for the best turnout. It was something on the lines of the London costermongers' parade, but lacking the inevitable donkey and some of the trappings of the Cockney procession. Mrs. Speyer is gratefully recalled for her great kindness to horses and dumb animals. A hospital and home for friendless and ailing pet cats and dogs has been founded to her memory in this city.

There were of course several noted summer resorts before Tuxedo came but they were open to the public without restraint or selection. It was Tuxedo that started the vogue for private country places, as against plebeian resorts.

It was in the '70s that Saratoga, whose fame is more apt to be perpetuated in the redoubtable trunk to which it has given its name, than to the battle that proved the undoing of "Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne," reached its zenith as the premier summer resort of America. The season then was a whole summer, not a few flying weeks devoted to the racing calendar, and the weather and fashion of the entire country moved *en masse* to "The Spa." The result was an unparalleled scene of splendor, with just a tinge of the rakish to add a thrill. Newport was more exclusive, but it was the "Cottage" life. Cape May had the old Bourbon society of the

South, now shattered by the war, and practicing an unwanted economy. Long Branch was rather a parvenu, but Saratoga had the biggest resort hotels in the world, sylvan beauty, therapeutic waters and a fashionable tradition going way back into the beginning of the century.

Before the war, Saratoga had been the favorite mecca of the Southern aristocracy fleeing from the miasma of the old Kentucky home, the Swanee River, and similar delectable resorts of the cholera, yellow fever, and malaria; and if Gettysburg and Antietam had not decimated the flower of the South, there were domestic bacilli that would have done the business instead. To the Springs, therefore, came the planters and their families, stopping over in New York to visit Mr. Stewart's great store at Chambers Street for gowns and Paisley shawls. In those days, the South had all the money and looked with a contempt on the grubby Northern industrialists and their immigrant labor. Newport was filled with "those damned Yankee abolitionists"; but Saratoga was tolerant, "in the New York manner," alive with Democratic politicians, and fast horses. Besides, it had ice for the juleps and French cooking. So the F. F. V.'s and the Georgia Crackers and Dixie in general came there periodically, to wash out the winter's quinine and listen to the band playing "The Grand Duchess" and the latest airs of the Christy Minstrels.

But the war changed all that, as wars have been known to do; and now came the war "contractors," the "speculators," the railroad men, all bloated with new-found wealth and ready to spend it. Mr. Stewart put up the Grand Union Hotel on a scale to dumfound Baden-Baden and Aix-le-Bains, and all Wall Street crowded its parlors to look at an enormous allegorical painting, as big as the drop-curtain of the Grand Opera House, depicting America shaking out a cornucopia to the assembled nations of the world. It was one of those pictures that cost \$150,000 to paint and bring \$49.75 at auc-

tion. Here came Bill Tweed, Peter Sweeney, Pete Connolly, and the rest of the "boys," wearing velvet waistcoats, big diamond rings and shirt-studs, and chewing tobacco in a noiseless and genteel manner as befitted corridors boasting the most highly polished brass spittoons in the United States. Adjacent were the United States Hotel and Congress Hall, both on the same colossal scale of innkeeping, their verandas swarming with gay toilettes of the Second Empire. "There was gold in them thar hills" in the Age of Innocence, trailing skirts and Climax Plug. You couldn't walk along one of these verandas without stumbling over the boots of a Vanderbilt, a Jerome, a Gould or someone else positively filthy with money, seated in a rocking chair, discussing the water-holding capacity of a new railroad along the Ashtabula River.

Around the corner in a by-way not far from a little white-spired church was John Morrissey's *Chateau du chance*, where one found amusing little balls running like mad along numbered wheels, and similar quaint contrivances, calculated to relieve the strain on a rubber band encircling a bank roll. It was wide open—that is, if you didn't look as if you had just come in from the haying; and even if you hadn't over a quarter left after paying for a shave and a shoe-shine, you could sit down in one of Morrissey's saloons and tell the colored man in the white jacket—he himself wearing a neat two-carat stone in his polished shirt bosom—to bring you some of the white meat of a chicken, a salad, a morsel of Camembert and a little Bar-le-duc jelly. No, you wouldn't take a half-pint of Pomery (wine was charged for)—against the doctor's orders, you know—but you laid down your last quarter in the lee of the cheese plate as the waiter lit your stogie, and then you strolled into the main salon as if you were about to lay a hundred on the red, looked a little bored at the rabble chancing tens and twenties—and so home and to bed.

All the New York Broadway jewelers, milliners and haberdashers had Saratoga branches, and they did a thriving trade.

As for the bars in the hotels—well, I don’t want to start an insurrection or I would recite in a thrilling monotone the catalogue of labels, fascinatingly reflected in the huge mirrors of the Grand Union.

And then the driving in the afternoon. The landaus, the victorias, the coupés, the phaetons, the barouches, with the rattling harness chains, and the lolling ladies shading their eyes with tiny parasols of point lace and jeweled handles. No, there is nothing in a platinum-mounted Rolls-Royce to equal the spectacular effect of Mrs. Johnny Coaloil riding in a Brewster barouche, behind two cockaded servitors, and a pair of manicured roans, along the Saratoga macadam.

CHAPTER XVII

French Bathing Costumes and the Bradley Martins' Ball

SARATOGA was somewhat on the wane when President Grant decided to make Long Branch, N. J., his summer home, and of course, set it to the forefront as the chief seashore resort of the nation. Prior to this time, however, it had been much in favor as the holiday ground of Wall Street and the theatrical profession. Jarrett & Palmer ran a speedy line of boats to Sandy Hook—famous flyers in their day, which provided rapid and convenient transit from the foot of Cedar Street. Edwin Booth built a house there, in which he was married, and which was afterwards occupied by Maggie Mitchell, who also owned a number of other cottages and farms in the neighborhood.

"The Branch" did not grow up slowly year after year, as Saratoga and Newport did. Before the flash age of the '70s, it was only a lonely stretch of sandy shore, with a village half a mile back of the beach. Its transformation was effected by a few capitalists who bought farms in Monmouth County for thirty or forty dollars an acre, and thus began a ballyhoo. "A scheme of advertising was adopted," says a contemporary, "brave, expensive and perilous, by which the place was persistently brought before the public attention, summer after summer. The ubiquitous correspondent of the daily Press was sent down to report. It was not a very fascinating spot in those early days, but the reporter who cannot write an

attractive letter merely because there is nothing attractive to write about, has mistaken his vocation. By one device or another, legitimate and illegitimate, by building a new railroad, by improvements of various sorts, the capitalists forced the growth of the place, and achieved a veritable *coup d'état* when they induced President Grant to go and live there in the summer. Long Branch became the summer capital and its fortune was made. Lots that sold for \$500, one summer, were held at \$5,000 the next. Everybody was elated, excited; there was champagne in the air, and life was gay and fascinating to residents as to the going and coming crowd."

One of the most noted resorts of early Long Branch was Chamberlain's "Cottage" near the West End Hotel, where nightly may have been seen throngs of Wall Street men and other skirmishers with the goddess of luck around the roulette and card tables. This was the celebrated Chamberlain of Washington Restaurant renown, later boniface of the big hotel at Old Point Comfort. Ladies, however, did not mingle in the scene at Chamberlain's, as they do in the European casinos, but they had their day at Monmouth Park race track, where the "mutuels" were in effect, and one might lay a wager on "Harry Bassett," "Longfellow," or "Hindoo" with the same facility as at Longchamps or Chantilly.

Long Branch at this period is pungently described by the beforementioned writer as having a "gingerbread appearance at which solid old Newport and substantial Saratoga sniff with scorn. When the dinner train arrives from town, Ocean Avenue is alive with fast flying horses, driven by men in livery—sometimes as gaudy as those of the equine dramatic tent—numberless flags flutter from liberty poles on lawns and hotel tops, brass bands blare on the grassy lawn, and here and there side-show-like tents for the sale of pop and gingerbread, or practice with air guns at striped targets, and the whole thing is irresistibly suggestive of sawdust and a ring."

I know that the bright young people from our inland

towns, who write facetiae in the Press about the old-time bathing dress, are convinced that they are the very first to discover its lack of æsthetic appeal. Let me, with the greatest kindness of which my cynical old heart is capable, disabuse them of this idea by again quoting my senior contemporary. "If the Witch of Endor had presided at the construction of these miraculous bathing suits, they could scarcely be more ugly and fantastic than they are. Bathing dresses, less shabby, to be leased for a sum less absurdly close to their net value, are one item of the reform which is imperatively demanded at Long Branch. A group of bathers such as may sometimes be seen at a French watering place, where the suits are varied in color and pattern, and fit neatly, is a sight so picturesque that one does not tire of it. The idea that a handsome bathing suit 'attracts attention' is absurd; nothing attracts so much attention or attracts it so unpleasantly as an ugly and unbecoming bath dress. French ladies realize this, and dress accordingly, selecting their bathing outfit as carefully with respect to becomingness in color and cut, freshness and fit, as any dress they wear. It is a delicate rose flannel, with pleatings of white; hat trimmed in accordance; pink hose and straw shoes; or it is a navy blue serge, with stripes of yellow or of white, or of brown merino, or some other tasteful combination. At Long Branch, it is almost always a coarse dark flannel, much too large, and crowned with a straw hat more fit for a gutter than for a lady's wear. And as for the gentlemen! Ye heathen deities! What scarecrows they usually are! Yet once in a while a handsome or a picturesque costume may be observed among them—a tight-fitting blue *gilet de laine*, or a loose sailor's shirt and trousers handsomely braided."

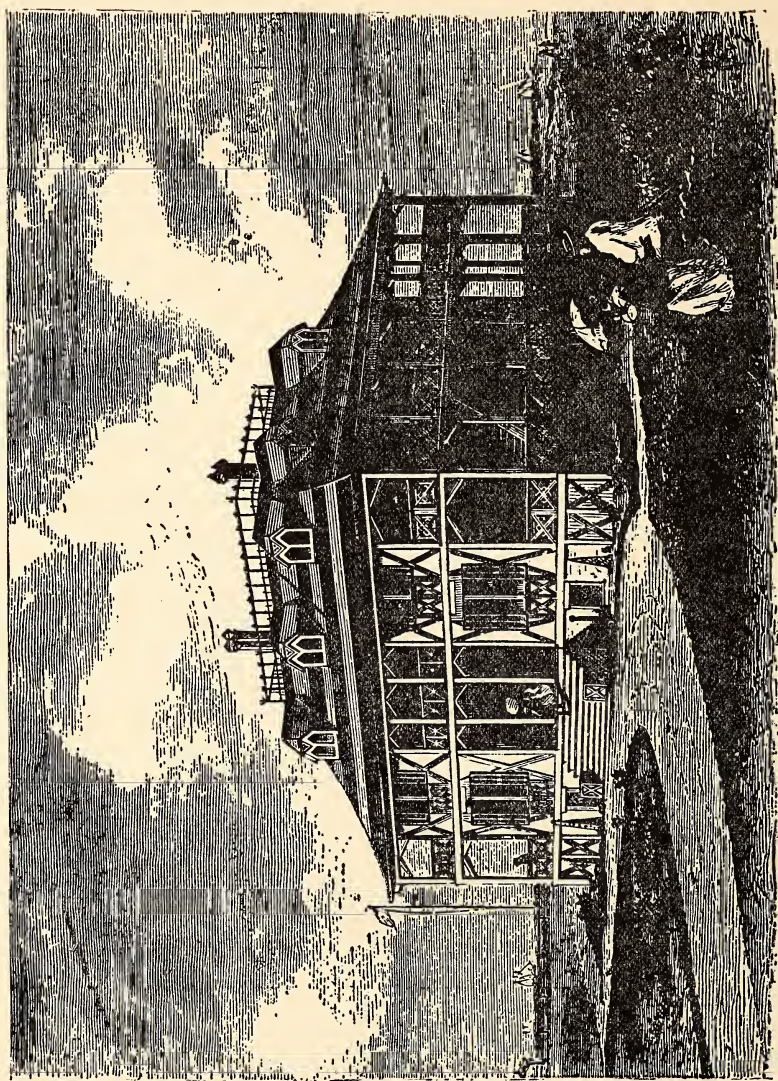
The French bathing costume began to attract the attention of our local natatorialists when it appeared on cigarette pictures, which were assiduously collected by small boys along with "Flags of All Nations," and similar colorful prints. I

may add one word about sea bathing half a century ago; there were no professional lifeguards; no elevated platforms to overlook the bathers. The only guardians of the beach were the bath house lessees, who kept a good-natured eye on the bathers, ready to go in and assist should there be a cry for help. Drownings, under this system, were not uncommon, and only in quite recent times has the stalwart professional lifeguard become an institution on our bathing beaches.

Long Branch came once more into the spotlight when the lamented Garfield was borne from Washington to die comfortably, if not painlessly, in the less torrid atmosphere of the ocean compared with Washington. Garfield's premature ending filled the nation with mourning, but did much to hasten the adoption of Civil Service Reform. Woodrow Wilson also chose this Jersey resort as a rest cure. The White House, which he occupied, subsequently passed into the possession of Hubert T. Parson, president of the Woolworth Company, and forms one of the chains of beautiful homes he has in various parts of the world, including Fifth Avenue and Paris. How many will be in his chain when completed, I do not know, for he is a hospitable person.

The original Hollywood was also a Long Branch product, the south end of the village occupied as residences in contradistinction to the great hotel section being thus called. While the Branch is today no doubt larger, it has none of the hectic qualities which distinguished it in the '80s and is now eminently dull and respectable. All the old Continental snap and go has disappeared. The Monmouth Beach Races no longer intrigue the erstwhile devotees of Twenty Grand, Gallant Fox, or Man O' War.

Of course, the great society tradition of the last years of the past century, was the famous "400" or "Mr. McAllister's peerage" as some called it. Nothing ever lifted the "society" columns in the Press to a kind of "Court Gazette" level as did this inspired social fiction. What maneuvering, what



President Grant's cottage at Long Branch.

wire-pulling to enter the charmed circle! What heart-burning, what chagrin for those who failed to crash those golden gates! To subscribe to the Patriarchs or the Assembly, to sit in a box at the Horse Show; to find oneself part owner of a stockholder's box in the Diamond Horseshoe for either Monday, Wednesday or Friday nights and to sit therein, the cynosure of a battery of Lemaire opera glasses—this was the meaning of success to the climbers of those golden days. How the dandies were watched for the latest fad in collar or cravat. How the toilettes at the opera or the winter's routs on Fifth Avenue were recorded to the last flounce of lace in next day's chronicles. Not the Venezuela question, nor Dr. Cook's discovery of the North Pole, not even the sordid but absorbing details of Carlyle Harris on Trial, were allowed to "kill" the details of Mrs. Van Asdorf's latest creation by Worth. First, Second and Third Avenues were bound to have the very last scrap of information regarding it, and no excuse would deprive them of it.

But there came a time when certain members of this daz-



*The Westchester Polo Club. Match game for the
Challenge Cup, 1876.*

zling arcanum of a particularly pre-adamite ancestry, felt that some of the lower orders had been included in the original allotment; that in reality there were only 150 real, genuine blue-bloods in New York whose visiting cards entitled them to rank in the local peerage. There had to be a line drawn somewhere. When you have an established social status, guaranteed by rent rolls that have been in the family since before the Erie Canal, and you find yourself in the company of persons who weren't even in the Directory before the California gold rush, well, you know, it's rather pathetic. You begin to think that our set is getting a little mixed—and that the dinner dance last night was *certainly* a bit raucous—and a great deal of attention seemed to be devoted to the punch bowl, in quite a Western fashion.

But, be this as it may, the 150 were only a flash in the pan, and only a rat-bitten relic like the present scribe ever alludes to them or can recall their existence.

Even at this late day, there still lingers a certain but considerable interest in the famous Bradley Martin ball—a social event that threatened at one time to arouse such animosity among the poorer classes as to constitute a distinct danger to the city.

“Once in a generation or thereabouts the rivalry of social ambitions crystallize in an entertainment so stupendous in scope and sumptuous in detail that it makes an epoch in the history of society. The fame of the function goes forth to the uttermost parts of civilization. Such was the ball given by Mr. & Mrs. Bradley Martin and participated in by the greater part of the society of New York at the Hotel Waldorf last night. One of its 1200 odd invitations was to be a patent right to a place in the social list; hence the eagerness with which the gilded ones looked forward to the event.” Thus the *New York Sun* began a two-page account of the last great revel of the city's Upper Ten of the Nineteenth Century.

The protest against the prodigal expenditures of this most

advertised social function in local history, has an odd sound today when we are all urged to spend in order to revive trade and resuscitate the public welfare. Dr. Rainsford from the pulpit of St. George's Church inveighed against an entertainment of such lavish display at a time when popular discontent ran so high. Others opposed his view, and controversy on the question raged back and forth. "Meantime," says the *Sun*, "while the disputants called heaven and earth to witness the infallibility of their respective arguments, hundreds of dressmakers drew wages—and in a dull season—while working upon dresses for the ball; hundreds of extra hands were hired by costumers and bootmakers; hundreds of advance orders set the florists to hiring what help they could find; extra forces were put on at the hotel, making ready for the event, and throughout the rank and file of the unemployed the stir of preparation was felt in beneficial effects."

Through the discussion thus stirred up, the ball became a national topic, and newspapers from the Pacific to the sea-coast villages of Maine expressed their reactions. The Bradley Martins were overwhelmed with advice on all possible and impossible aspects of their project. The editor of a society weekly in New York solemnly adjured all prospective guests to study carefully the characters of the personages they intended to represent, so that their conversation might be historically accurate and avoid anachronisms. Editors in London and Paris, hearing that American splendor would reach its climax at the ball, sent orders for special cable reports, and what had been intended by the Bradley Martins as an elegant private entertainment became a sort of Barnumized circus.

There were no less than a score of Central Office detectives watching the guests' private entrance to the hotel, on the lookout for "Tommy the Dip" or "Six-Finger Mike," who, it was conjectured with all the foresight of Mulberry Street, might appear as Henry of Navarre or Richard Cœur de

Lion in appropriate Bowery costumer's apparel, or perhaps an anarchist or two bent on devastating the *chauds* and the *froids* of the supper room. But it was long before the day of the "gate-crasher," and neither Herr Most or the editor of *Das Arbeiter Zeitung* got at the Bradley Martins' free lunch.

"In the smoking room," says the *Sun*, "there was much practice on the part of the men in the matter of management of swords, and inconveniently trailing ruffles and laces." One man came as Sitting Bull, and when taken to task by some of the kings and courtiers present, replied, "If a full Indian headdress, beaded buckskins, and war-paint isn't *de signeur*, what in hell is *de signeur*?" During the dancing there were not a few contretemps. "There was one man there and he was not the only one who essayed to dance a waltz with his sword. He had a partner, too, but she didn't count. At the first turn, the cavalier got his sword entangled with his hose and kneeled down, swiftly but not silently, upon the floor. Arising with an apology to his partner, he whisked around in a quick swing and smote a French gentleman so violently athwart the shins that the French gentleman said things which it were better a gentleman should say in French. The cavalier apologized again, seized his sword by the handle, tilted it up, and committed *lèse majesté* on an English Monarch's bearded chin. Promptly dropping the sword, he again got tangled in it and then sought to grasp it with a singleness of purpose worthy of a kitten in fierce pursuit of its tail. Meantime his partner—he had forgotten he was dancing with her—had gone and sat down, and the Cavalier, having finally achieved his weapon again went to the dressing room and exchanged it with a liveried valet for a metal check."

There was a later correction in the columns of the *Sun* regarding the Indian Chief, who was not Sitting Bull, but Miantonomoh, "whose costume was made under the eye of Prof. Putnam of Harvard." It was worn by R. W. G. Welling, a descendant of John Greene, who had dealings with the

Chief in the matter of a sale of real estate in Rhode Island. Mr. Greene was assured that he could have all the land around which he could ride mounted on a bull backward, and the mere fact of Mr. Welling's appearance at the ball was eloquent testimony as to his ancestor's capacity as a rider.

For the benefit of the patrons of the Owl Lunch Wagons I reproduce the menu of this notable fête.

Chaud

Consomme de Volaidle, Bouillion de Clovis
Homard à la Newburg, Huitres a la Viennoise
Poularde farcie aux truffes, Filet de Boeuf Jardeniere
Terrapense deccossee a la Baltimore—Canard Canvasback

Froid

Galantine à la Victoria—Terrine de Foie Gras
Cailles Pignees a la Gelee—Chand-froid de Pluviers
Jambon en Danier—Mayonnaise de Volaille

Entremets de Douceur

Gelee aux Fruits—Gouffres Chantelly—Gateaux Madeline
Bisquits glaces, Fatma—Sorbet fin de Siecle—Tutti Frutti—
Café Parfait

Plombiere Aux Marrons

Glaces de Fantaisie—Petits Tours—Fruits, Bonbons—Café—
Moet et Chandon Brut Imperial, 1884
Château Mouton a Armagnac, 1884

On the night of the ball, there was a meeting of the Nineteenth Century Club at Sherry's to discuss the question of "Culpable Luxury." "Inasmuch," said President John A. Taylor, in opening the meeting, "as two of your lecture Committee were not invited to the Bradley Martins' ball, they thought it might be well to hold an overflow meeting here tonight and make it the subject of discussion. I take it that luxury is that which somebody else has and that we, ourselves, cannot afford, but that is a matter to be left to the

gentlemen who will discuss the question for us." These gentlemen were Prof. Franklin H. Giddings of Columbia University and John Graham Brooks of Boston. The debate, a very learned one, expressed alarm at the threat to our republican institutions in the jamboree at the Waldorf, but it does not seem to have penetrated its walls, for there is no record of any of the gay cavorters of that evening, appearing thereafter on Fifth Avenue in a costume of sackcloth and ashes.

The *Sun* declared that every woman of wealth in New York, who was known to be going to the ball, received a threatening letter. Mrs. Martin received a dozen. As a consequence, Manager Boldt of the Waldorf took particular precautions that only vouched-for employes worked in the hotel on the night of the ball, and a corps of Pinkerton men were also spread out in the premises.

Gilbert the photographer, at Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street, and twenty-six assistants were kept busy all night taking pictures of nearly four hundred guests, who were posed against backgrounds appropriate to their costumes. The Bradley Martin ball was the swan song—and dance—of New York Society that was. "After us the deluge," was the motto of the retreating gentry of *fin de siècle* Gotham. Trade was nibbling at their Fifth Avenue brownstone fronts and the next score of years would see their fabulous highway a mart of trade and commerce.

The City fathers were so impressed by the magnificence of the Martins that they promptly showed their appreciation by raising their tax assessments to a dizzy height. This deeply offended Mr. and Mrs. Martin, and they promptly shook the dust of New York from their feet and repaired to a castle on the moors of Scotland where they revived all the splendor and glories of the Martin clan, including grouse shooting, deer stalking and innumerable gillies to decorate the approaches to the castle.

CHAPTER XVIII

Brilliant Celebrations in Our History

THE closing years of the Nineteenth Century included many dates that recalled the stirring events of a hundred years which made them forever illustrious.

The Centennial Celebration of the Inauguration of General Washington as first President of the United States, was probably the most important in the series and the most magnificent spectacular event in the history of the city up to that time. The Celebration lasted three days—and duplicated as near as possible the scenes and incidents which marked the original ceremonies. President Harrison, who was then our chief magistrate, reached Elizabeth, the New Jersey town, in the morning, just as his predecessor General Washington had done a hundred years before. The place was brilliant with decoration and every house was bedecked with flags and bunting. The streets were thronged with enthusiastic crowds, and the reception given the President was so whole-hearted and spontaneous that it will surely be talked of until the next Centennial Celebration comes around. President Harrison was accompanied by his official family and many of their friends.

The procession to Elizabethport, the point of embarkation, marched through the same road which Washington took when he went to embark on the barge that carried him to New York. At Elizabethport the President and the gentlemen of his escort, together with the officers of the various commit-

tees, boarded the Government steamer *Despatch*. The ladies of the party and the invited guests were taken on board the steamers *Wiman* and *Monmouth* and these vessels proceeded to New York, with a swarm of minor craft following in their wake, reproducing the Naval Parade as it was in Washington's time.

The harbor and rivers were crowded with a collection of all kinds and conditions of steam vessels and floating craft, from the powerful and dignified man-of-war to the impudent little tug darting hither and thither with reckless impetuosity. All the river steamers were crowded with passengers going to view this unparalleled naval spectacle, and every vessel was radiant with color and bedecked from stem to stern with flags and bunting. The harbor was one mass of color and a perfect maze of bunting and flags of all nations. The United States war ships were anchored in a line on the upper bay, headed by the *Boston*, Admiral David D. Porter commanding the fleet.

When the *Despatch* reached the position assigned her opposite the foot of Wall Street, the barge approached and the President and his escort boarded her. The scene, as the President stood in the stern of the barge with his aides around him, was a striking reproduction of the original event when Washington sailed over the same course in 1789. The barge was manned by a crew consisting of twelve retired ship masters, with Captain Ambrose Snow as commander. Each wore a suit of black broadcloth, a high hat and a blue badge.

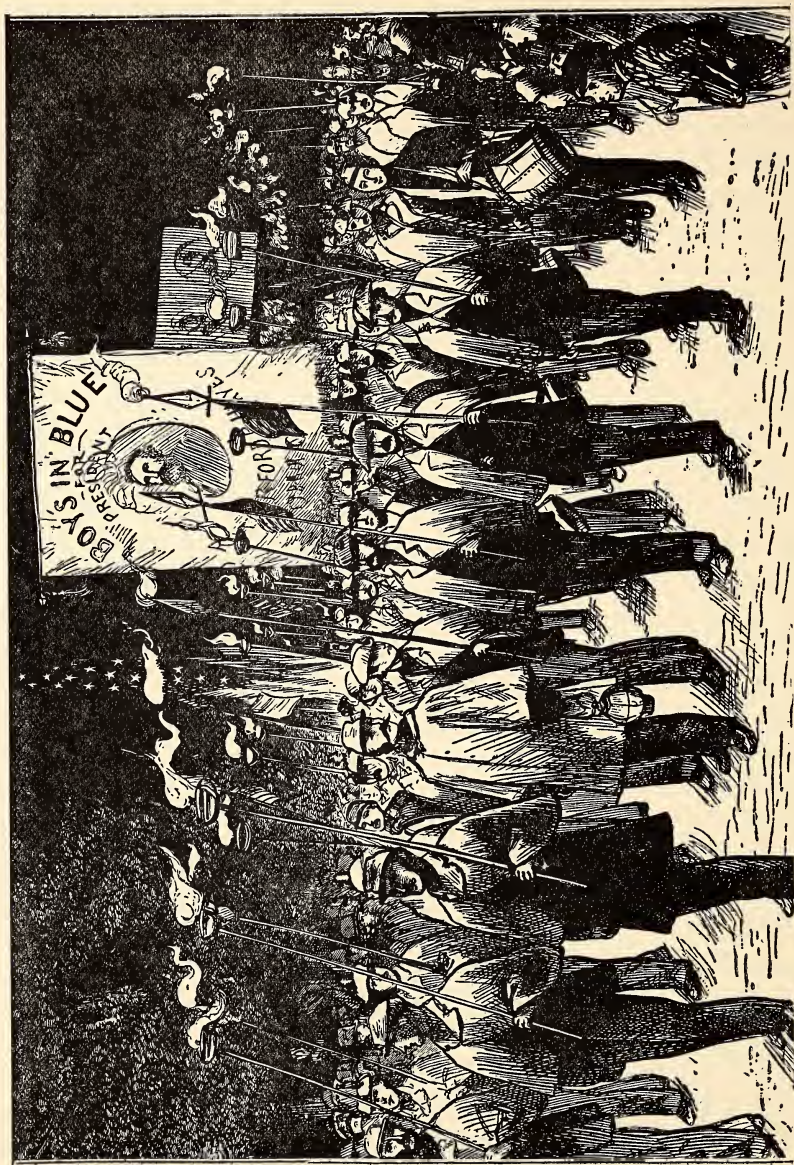
At the same old landing place, the President stepped on a float covered with purple cloth and proceeded up the steps to the street. The landing was made at twenty minutes past one, and the President was received by Governor Hill, Mayor Grant and Hamilton Fish. He was at once whirled off to the Equitable Building where a luncheon was served.

After the repast the President went to the City Hall and held a public reception, and when this ordeal was over he

went to the residence of Vice-President Morton on Fifth Avenue to rest.

The next day, April 30th, was the actual day of the Inauguration of Washington, and the program began with divine services in the churches and the ringing of church bells. Old St. Paul's Chapel was the center of attraction and here great crowds congregated. A procession in carriages conveying the President, Vice-President, Governor, Mayor, Supreme Court Justices and Senators of New York, two ex-Presidents and the Bishops of New York, Long Island, Iowa and Tennessee and many other notables went to the old Church. The President occupied the pew that Washington used when he went to church on the morning of his Inauguration, and Governor Hill the one used by Governor Clinton. Bishop Potter preached the sermon and the choir performed its part with distinction. Services over, the line of carriages proceeded to Wall Street, Mayor Grant's carriages being first, the President and Vice-President and all the other dignitaries following.

Wall and Broad Streets, especially about the Sub-Treasury building, were packed with people eager to see and hear all that took place. St. Gauden's heroic bronze statue of Washington, erected on the site occupied by Washington when he took the oath of office, stood out in all its fine proportions and about it was grouped the notables who were to take part in the proceedings. The Bible on which Washington took the oath of office; the table on which it originally rested, and the chair Washington used during part of the ceremony were all brought out for this great centennial occasion. President Harrison occupied this chair. Chauncey M. Depew was the orator. The resplendent military uniforms of the officers on the platform and the somber robes and gowns of the judges and clergy made a contrast that was both striking and effective. When Rev. Dr. Storrs of Brooklyn came forward to pronounce the benediction, President Harrison rose and took his



The Republican barbecue in Brooklyn. Procession of the Boys in Blue.

place beside him, with his head lowered and his hand resting on the identical Bible that Washington had used. Thus the exercises ended here.

In the meantime, the great military parade was under way on Broadway. All the suburbs and the country around poured in streams of visitors to view this great event. The line of march was from the Equitable Building in Broadway to Waverly Place, into Washington Square and thence up Fifth Avenue to Central Park. The whole line of march was black with people and platforms were built on every spot of ground from which a sight of the parade could be obtained.

The great industrial parade, to many people the most interesting of all, was the third great event of this historic celebration and occupied the entire day of May 1st. The route was from Fifty-ninth Street down Fifth Avenue and Broadway to Canal Street, passing the official stand at Madison Square where it was reviewed by the President and other dignitaries. General Sherman and his brother Senator John Sherman accompanied him.

The floats were wonderful. There were nearly a hundred of them and such an exhibition of industrial and commercial activities was never before witnessed. It was a fitting observation of the hundredth anniversary of the Inauguration of George Washington as first President of the United States.

Few persons observing that beautiful Washington Arch at the head of Fifth Avenue where it emerges from the Square, are aware of the fact that it is the one permanent memorial of the great celebration.

The design is by Stanford White, then the leading architect of the day and who was at the apex of his fame. No shadow of the coming tragedy that was to blast his reputation forever fell upon him on the day of Dedication. For one brief moment he tasted all the sweets of professional acclaim and the plaudits of the multitude for his beautiful creation. It is without question a notable work of art and a great ornament

to a city, whose efforts up to that time in the way of municipal decoration were not always crowned with laurel and bay leaves.

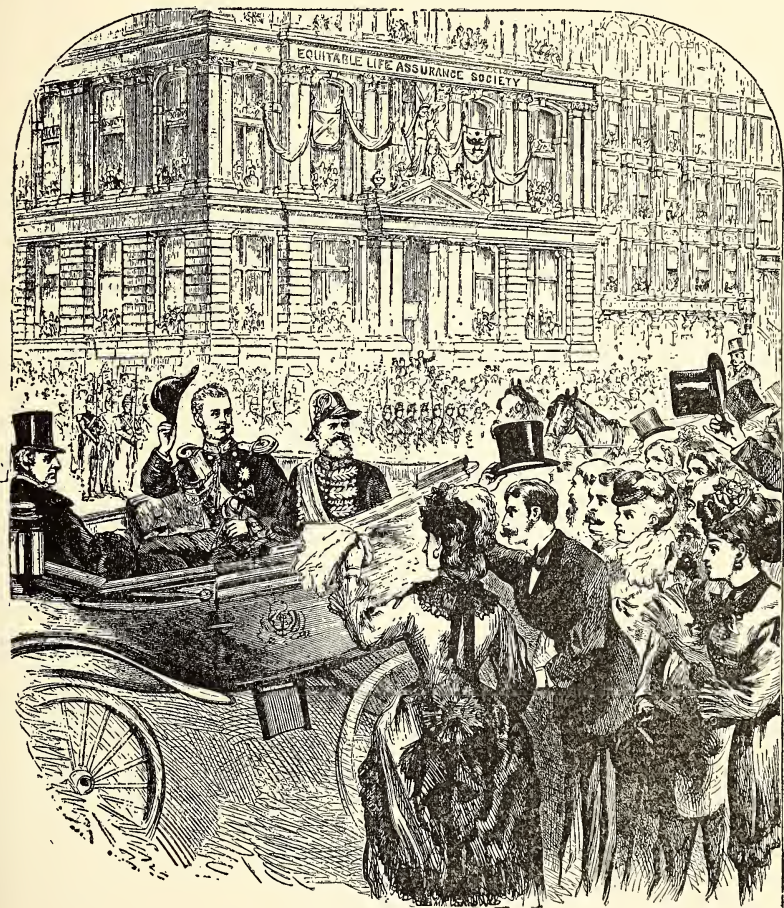
The Washington Arch, however, was not a municipal enterprise. It was largely the gift of the late William Rhinelander Stewart and his neighbors in the immediate vicinity of the Square. Miss Serena Rhinelander, an old New Yorker, then lived in the Square Georgian house on the northwest corner; Edward Cooper opposite, William H. Butler at No. 1, Mrs. Robert W. de Forrest at No. 7 opposite the Park, and quite a few others.

The First Centennial Celebration of Evacuation Day was held on Monday, Nov. 26, 1883, the actual day falling on a Sunday. The great military and civic procession marched down Broadway and was witnessed by hundreds of thousands of people standing on the line of march and crowding the side streets as far down as it was possible to see anything. At every window which came within the plane of vision could be seen a bevy of laughing and cheerful faces enjoying the fine spectacle. Besides the President of the United States, there were the Governors of seven of the original Thirteen States and many other notables. In the procession there were over 20,000 men and their fine appearance and splendid marching did credit to both the military and civic authorities.

Shortly after eleven the vanguard appeared. The mounted police led the way, followed by the Marshal, Gen. M. T. McMahon, accompanied by several Army officers and followed by his aides. The West Point Cadets came next in order, then the men of the Regular Army, the marines and artillery making a fine showing. The sailors from the warships next came along and made a splendid appearance, completely capturing the fancy of the populace. Next came the State Guards. First the Signal Corps and following them the Eighth, Ninth, Twelfth, Twenty-second, Seventh, Seventy-first and Sixty-ninth Regiments, the First Battery and the Sec-

ond Battery, N. G. S. N. Y. and after these the boys of the Naval Reserve.

The Second Brigade was composed of out-of-town regiments, including the Thirteenth, Twenty-third, Fourteenth, and Forty-seventh, the Third Battery and the Seventh separate company, all of Brooklyn. Next came the National Guard of Pennsylvania, a contingent from New Jersey, the Gate



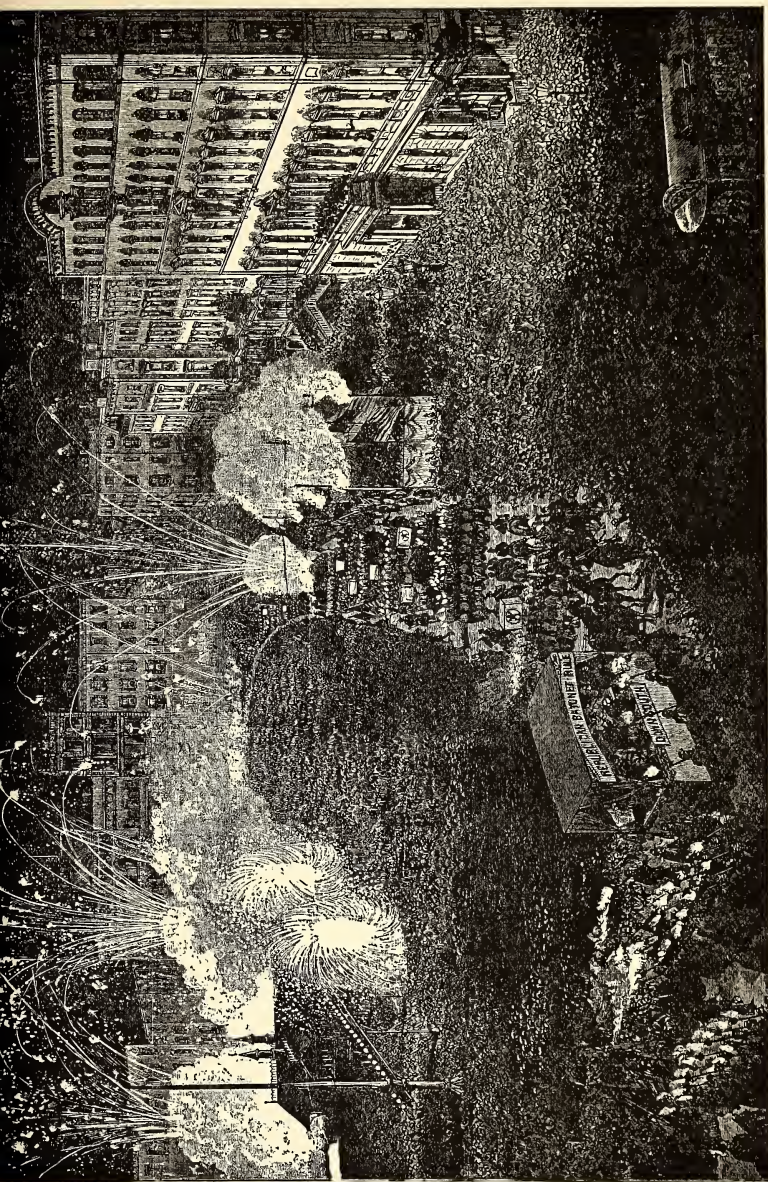
Reception of the Grand Duke Alexis, 1871.

City Guard of Atlanta, and four regiments from Connecticut with the Governor of the State at their head. The parade ended with a procession of officials and civilians in carriages.

The second event in the great pageant was the naval parade on the waters of the harbor and North and East Rivers. These two pageants divided the attention of the multitudes and packed every important street in the city. From McGowan's Pass to the Battery and at all the vantage grounds of the North and East Rivers, spectators occupied every foot of space and witnessed a scene both on land and water never to be forgotten. Superb bands of music, battalions of brilliantly uniformed soldiers, companies of veterans, fire companies, industrial and political associations, colleges and schools, representative groups of labor and finance, the civic and federal officials, with the glorious old battle flags and other time-honored relics, moved and glittered by in seemingly endless procession. The next day the second act was presented in a colorful procession on the river near by.

This naval parade of war ships and merchant ships started from the Narrows, proceeding up the inner bay and then into the North River as far up as One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Street. The program provided for all other vessels to follow the line of battleships; but instead of falling into line as intended, they moved about at their own discretion and made a very interesting escort to the great line of cruisers and men-of-war moving slowly up the river. All sorts of craft were out and were festooned with bunting and flying flags, making a gay and striking scene for the thousands of people who crowded the shores of Staten Island and the water front of Brooklyn. At the Battery there was a solid mass of humanity as far back as it was possible to see, and the windows and roofs of every building where a glimpse of the parade could be had was filled to its capacity.

Brooklyn Bridge was crowded with a great gathering of people to view the water procession. From this point of view



Grand parade and torchlight procession in honor of Tilden and reform.

the scene that presented itself to the observer was inexpressibly inspiring and striking. The waters of the bay and rivers were alive with vessels of all sorts, and the orderly procession of this great fleet presented a panorama of picturesque and fascinating interest.

The line of vessels stretching far up the Hudson and filling the upper bay steamed around the Battery up the East River as far as the Navy Yard, then turned back and headed for Bay Ridge where it dispersed. In the evening there were great festivities and a splendid display of fireworks. It was far into the following morning before New York's gayety subsided and the people returned to their homes conscious of having fittingly commemorated this great historic event.

As the ships passed Bedloe's Island and Castle William, the national salute was fired and the battleships responded, and as the great parade ended at One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Street the foghorns and whistles of countless river craft burst out and finished a day which will linger in the memory of many New Yorkers.

Thus ended the third in the series of celebrations held to commemorate important historical events which had occurred at the birth of the Nation a hundred years before.

Another celebration of unusual splendor and magnificence was the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus. It was celebrated with a vim and enthusiasm surprising even to New Yorkers. For three days, New York was in the streets and kept the city in a tumult of unprecedented excitement and amusement. Representatives of Spanish royalty and descendants of Columbus were among the City's guests. Replicas of the *Nina*, *Pinta* and *Santa Maria* sailed into the harbor.

A notable incident of the occasion was the meeting of the two candidates for the Presidency just on the eve of the election and in the last days of a hot campaign—President Harrison and ex-President Cleveland, and their meeting was of

the heartiest. They approached each other wreathed in smiles, shook hands warmly and seemed to enjoy the humor of the meeting as much as the cheering mass of their admiring fellow-countrymen.

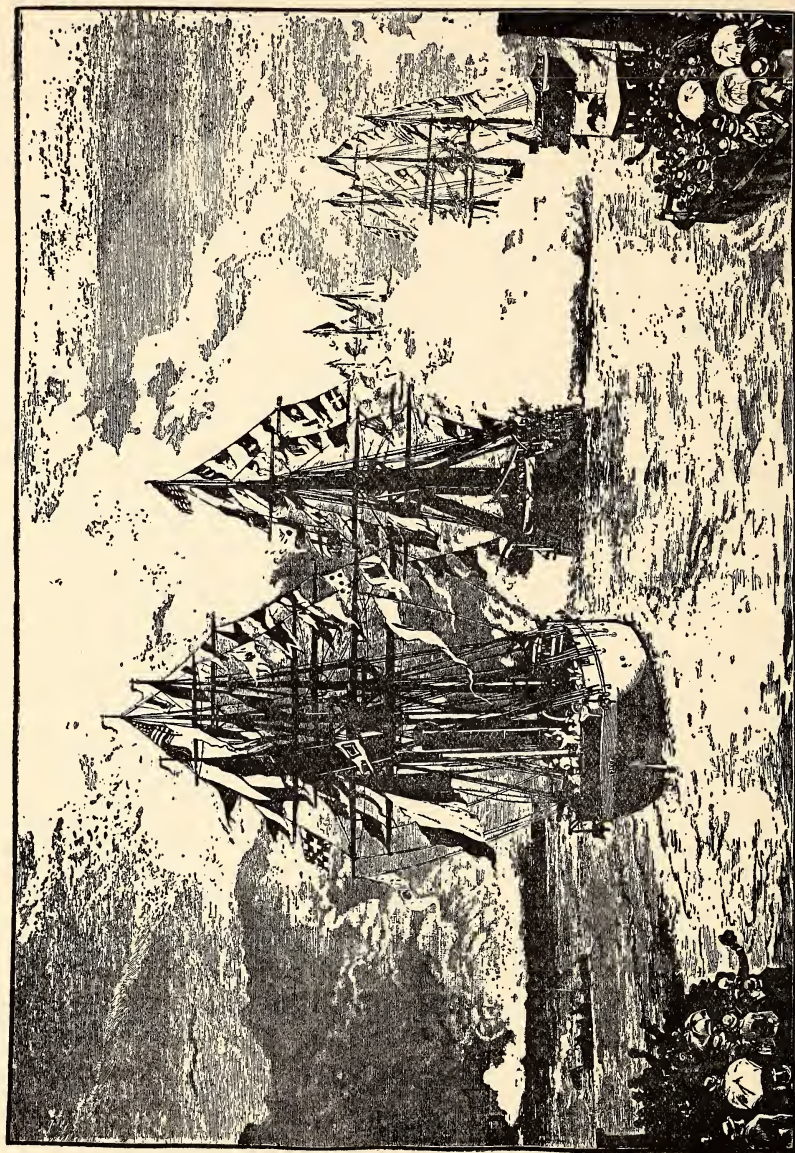
The parade started by a Grand March of the City's School children down Fifth Avenue from the Columbian Arch, at Fifty-ninth Street made by Hertz—himself a product of the public school, to the Washington Arch, at the foot of the Avenue, led by a line of mounted policemen, followed by the Grand Marshal and his staff, also mounted, and then by Mayor Hugh J. Grant alone and on foot.

Then came the Seventh Regiment band, followed by twenty regiments of boys of the public schools ten thousand strong. Next a division from Long Island City, one from Jersey City, and one from the Catholic Schools. Following these, a division of private schools headed by a drum corps of boys with a very important drum major marching in front.

The College division was headed by six hundred students from the College of the City of New York, followed by students from Columbia University, University of the City of New York and finally the Art Students' League.

One of the features of the day was the representation of schoolgirls, arrayed in white garments with a touch of bright color here and there. They were seated on a great stand built in front of the reservoir at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street. The young ladies filled the air with their music, singing one song after another, and as their clear voices rang out, the music of the bands ceased and the marchers themselves changed for the time being from entertainers to entertained.

A million and a half is the estimate of the number of people who viewed the night pageant. A long procession of floats and equestrians occupied many hours in passing up Broadway and Fifth Avenue and made a display long to be remembered



Reception of Bartholdi's statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World."

The Naval procession passing through the Narrows.

by those who were fortunate enough to secure a vantage spot to see it.

Some of the Floats, particularly the great Brewery trucks, made a great hit with the spectators. These vehicles, crowded with good looking Fräuleins in native costume half hidden behind enormous bushes of hops, were warmly greeted. One or two rampant Harlem goats coyly covered with dogwood, pussy willows and other harbingers of Spring to indicate the coming of Bock Beer, also caught the favor of the crowd. We had a vast German population at that time and very few Italians. So Columbus, to the great majority of our East side citizenry, was simply another "wop." But East Side, West Side, and all around the town was proud of the fact that in New York you could get the largest schooner of beer in the country for five cents.

So the celebration was a great success and resulted in naming the space at Fifty-ninth Street and Broadway leading to the Park in honor of the great Italian navigator—Columbus Circle. Later on, the Columbus Monument was erected based on the temporary staff construction designed by Hertz for this particular parade.

The *Nina*, *Pinta* and *Santa Maria* proceeded to Chicago and formed one of the main attractions of the great World's Fair in that city held to commemorate this same event.

CHAPTER XIX

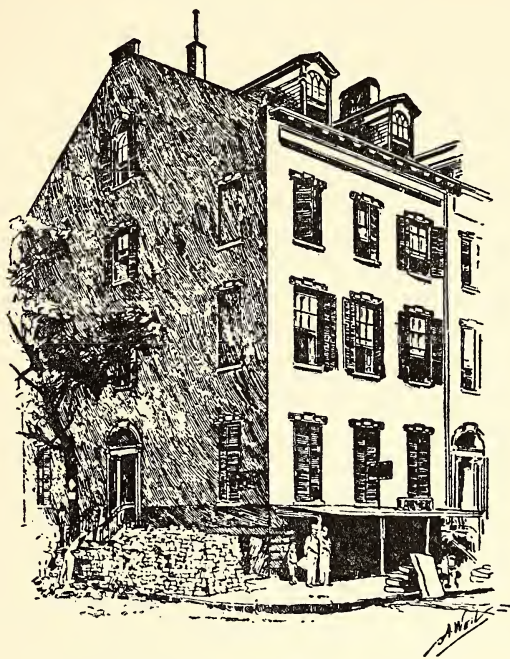
New York Oddities and Mansions of the Great

It is extremely difficult, almost impossible, I might say, for the present generation to believe that not so very long ago, a young woman seen smoking a cigarette was immediately classed as a person of decidedly questionable character, to use a mild description. The custom was imported from the Continent, where it had already attained considerable vogue. Its appearance in London caused quite a commotion, but nothing to compare with the agitation which marked its introduction to New York.

The very high-class restaurants like Delmonico's and Sherry's were the first to face this dilemma. Some women who had traveled much, had become accustomed to the sight of other women smoking in foreign capitals, and although they had not yet themselves adopted the habit, were nevertheless tolerant of others who did. Naturally, the great majority of women were ignorant of European customs, and a large leaven of Puritanism was still to be considered. The result was that the question of whether women should be allowed to smoke in public places became one of burning interest. Men at that time were not allowed to smoke in a room where women also dined, so the question was fraught with greater difficulty than seems at first sight possible. And the women who wished to indulge in the seductive weed belonged to families of such importance in the social scale that their request amounted to a command.

To set aside a room in which both men and women could

eat and smoke, but apart from the general dining-room, was not a successful compromise. The women wanted absolute freedom in the choice of rooms, and after many embarrassing experiments, the very exclusive hotels and restaurants were obliged to capitulate. It was many, many months, however,



NO. 16 BEACH STREET, NEW YORK.

In 1841 James K. Paulding had become prosperous, and he chose this house for a residence.

before a woman could smoke in public without becoming the target of all eyes, and if she was at all sensitive, suffered considerable embarrassment. As the habit spread and finally came to be regarded as the last word in "smartness," the custom became quite popular. The waiter no longer interrupted to say "'scuse me, madam, but zee smoking, he not allowed."

Another circumstance which gave rise to much public dis-

cussion in the Press, in society and whenever women met, was the burning question of whether to wear or not to wear your hat at the play.

Except to those who remember the enormous "Cartwheel" hats worn by women, with their towering plumes and feathers, no one can realize the irritation caused in the theater by the wearing of such styles in the old days. No matter where you sat, you were obliged to dodge from one side of your seat to the other, in order to get a view of the stage. And as the wearer herself, in turn, was obliged to do the same, it was quite an ordeal to sit through a play while the use of the big hat continued.

One would imagine that a slight regard for the comfort of others would have served to remedy this evil the moment such an objection was raised, but, strangely enough, a very decided opposition sprang up. It couldn't be said that this was wholly an exhibition of bad manners. To remove one of these ungainly headgears in a public place was no small undertaking. And after they were off, the next problem was what to do with them. They were too large to go under the seats and too wide to go on the lap, and as they were stuck on with hatpins that penetrated vast bunches of false hair as well as real hair, it was no small matter to get them on again properly once they were off. A mirror was needed. So it was quite a dilemma.

The change came gradually after months of tearful supplication by the managers, printed requests in the programs, indignant letters in the papers, and a general realization on the part of women themselves, that something ought to be done. The first concession was to sit with the hat on till the curtain was about to go up. Then a few removed their hats. The idea spread. More women adopted this idea and were rewarded by the appreciative thanks of the persons behind them. Fashion aided the movement by reducing the size of the hat and abolishing the "Cartwheel" altogether. Then a special theater

hat was designed. This could be easily removed and held on the lap without discomfort. But it was several years before it became an accepted custom to remove the hat before taking a seat and leaving it in the cloakroom, to the great relief and greater comfort of all concerned.

Among other random recollections of my period, there is one which might appear too trivial for the record were it not that it is to some degree significant of the enhancement of personal comfort that has been coincident with the progress of the last half century. I refer to such a commonplace as doorways to shops and public places. Less than forty years ago there was no such animal as a revolving door. Much frequented entrances were protected from wintry blasts by the common device of a storm door, not always an ideal arrangement. Many—in fact, nearly all—small stores were without this luxury, and it was the distressing habit of hasty customers and uninvited casuals to leave the door ajar on entering or leaving, giving admittance to such blasts as the outer elements afforded, with, of course, consequent distress to the inhabitants. I have known the mildest of shopkeepers to become transformed into a bellowing bull, simply because of the necessity of shouting continuously, "*Shut that door!*" Others acquired laryngitis, not from the cold, but from this unremitting vocal exercise. A Doctor Jekyll of storekeepers would under these conditions end the day as Mr. Hyde, and go home a terror to his family. Some amelioration was afforded by pasteboard cut-outs of beautiful ladies, bearing the printed legend, "Please shut the door," visible through the glass. But this was noticeable only to the incoming patron, who on emerging, would very likely forget all about the blandishments of the pasteboard damsel and leave the door open, followed by a choice volley of smothered profanity. Finally, one of those celestial benefactors of harassed merchants, unknown to those halls of fame containing the busts of machine gun inventors and dynamite chemists, devised the

pneumatic door control, now so common. These lines, I fear, are probably the only public recognition his genius will ever receive.



NO. 63 PRINCE STREET, NEW YORK.

In 1829 the ex-president (Monroe), having met with losses that swept away his fortune, left his Virginia home and journeyed to No. 63 Prince Street, where he died July 4, 1831.

Of course, this train of thought recalls the hardships of outdoor life during "an old-time winter." It may be that winters were more severe than those we now enjoy—or undergo.

But I am inclined to think that conditions made them so. Certainly no modern motorman would endure the rigors of an old time car-driver on an exposed platform, and a taxi driver is a coddled darling compared with the petrified Jehu of a "hack," whose circulation depended on an envelope of moth-eaten fur, aided and abetted by the unwonted luxury of a hot water can or hot brick under his feet. Nor did passengers in horse cars fare much better in these frigid arks, with icy floors and an anemic stove nursed by a conductor who administered coal to its iron constitution in homeopathic doses. In some miraculous manner, the addition of straw to the floor was supposed to provide sufficient heat for all practical purposes in the absence of a stove; but I still retain a vivid impression that this subterfuge was a delusion and a snare. Yet a belief in its efficacy remained for many years, and was only with great reluctance finally abandoned. Many were the long delays encountered after a heavy snowfall, and the cruelty to horses was something I wish to forget.

But the summertime offered some compensations to the street car rider. Open cars afforded cool, cheap, and outside of rush hours, comfortable transportation. I think the Third Avenue line was the first to introduce open cars to this city. One of its long rides was up to Fort George, "Little Coney Island," it was called, on whose cliffs overlooking the Harlem River, stood a diminutive reproduction of the famous seaside resort at the other extremity of the big town. There was a Ferris Wheel, pop corn and peanuts, merry-go-rounds, and above all refreshment stands where the famous *Fort George Schooner* used to navigate unceasingly.

Of other notable horse car rides one of the more interesting of all New York was that on the old "Belt Line" which, as its name suggests, used to circumnavigate the lower reaches of Manhattan below Fifty-ninth Street. The old tinkling horse car used to ply a leisurely route down along the North River docks, up along the East River front, then across Fifty-ninth

Street to the point of beginning. Nearly all the city's picturesque marine activities were visible from this old imitation of a jaunting car; the North River steamers and the East River windjammers, which were still a surviving relic of the famous old Clipper Ship era. Past the old piers of the long defunct Inman Line, Monarch Line, National Line, Thingvallia Line, State Line; past the white oyster boats at Tenth Street, very argosies of gastronomical delight to a generation that knew its oysters; past the old steamboat wharves of the Hudson River and Sound liners, the Glen Island boats, and the Paten Line down the Shrewsbury to Long Branch; past Castle Garden and up South Street under the bowsprits of the deep-sea sailing ships; past the shipchandlers with their delightful tarry smell and the canal boats at Coenties Slip which was a sight all by itself—a veritable Chinese river-front colony where children were born, went to school, and never knew any home but in the stern sheets of a canaler; past Fulton Market and the ferry to Brooklyn; under the Big Bridge, up through a highway of sailors' boarding houses and dives, then the Dry Dock district, Corlears Hook and into the doldrums above, until the car turns into Fifty-ninth Street and bowls along the southerly margin of Central Park.

The old "Belt Line," with its little half-portion bobtail car has long ago ceased to function, but for many years it led a useful and laborious life.

Another ride that was a veritable treat in summer to many people was on Jake Sharp's famous Broadway line, with its extra wide seats. This busy thoroughfare was practically deserted after six o'clock; but by eight, numerous trippers made their appearance from the teeming East Side, above Houston Street and supplied a very acceptable substitute for the vacant benches that hitherto had made the journey in silence. This trip became decidedly popular after the road substituted cable cars in place of horses. The cars were roomy, driven at a much higher speed than in the daytime and were seldom

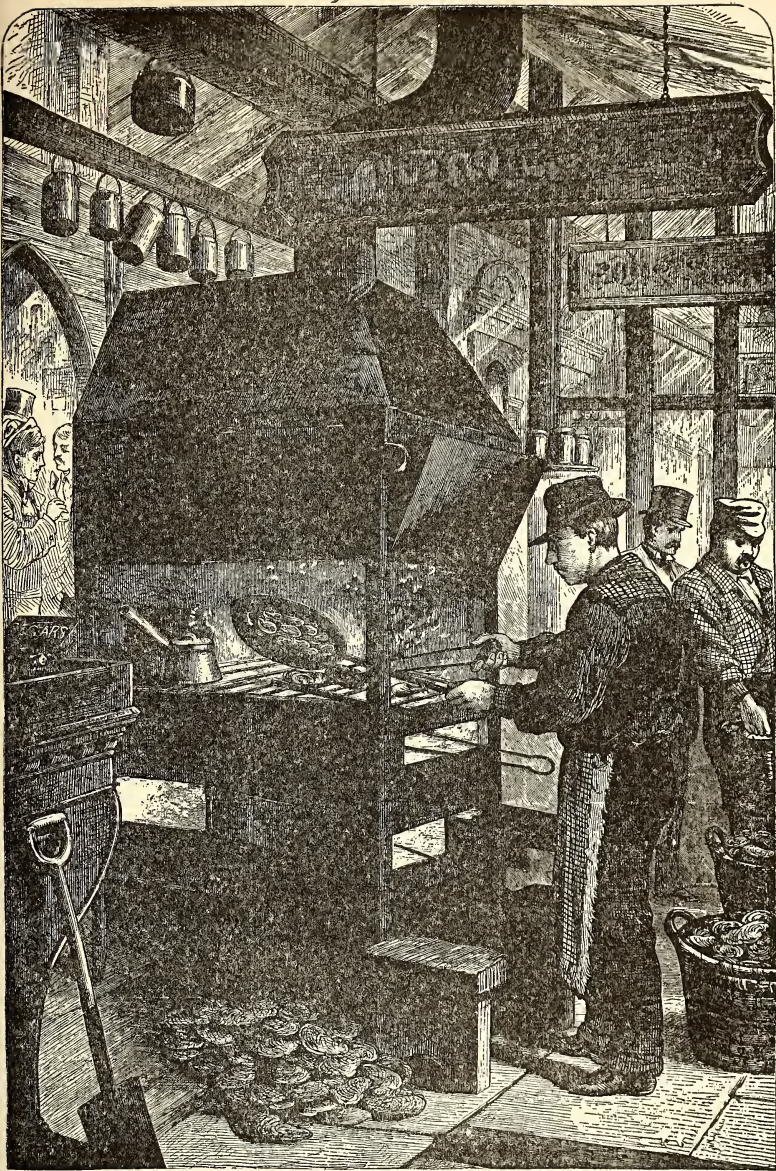


The Republican barbecue in Brooklyn. Roasting the oxen.

required to stop for passengers. The result was a refreshing breeze all the way to the Battery. There the passenger dismounted, strolled along the waterfront and gazed at the constantly moving ships in the harbor with their green and red lights bobbing in the moonlight. On a hot summer night, this ride was positively thrilling to the patronage it served.

The towers for Brooklyn Bridge were only just beginning to rise in the '70s, and travel to our sister city was entirely by means of ferryboats. Fulton Street on account of this was, perhaps, the busiest cross-street in the city, and the famous Fulton Market did a roaring retail business. The street was originally called Fair Street, but after Robert Fulton established his Ferry to Brooklyn at the East River end of the street, the municipality changed the name, in honor of the great inventor, to "Fulton." Brooklyn did the same thing. So when you left Fulton Street, New York, you landed on its continuation in the sister city. The Brooklyn approach to the ferry was ornamented by a huge cast-iron statue of Fulton, which is now, I believe, in the campus of Vassar College. This was the first steam ferry in the world organized for daily passenger traffic by Fulton and Livingston.

Lower Fulton Street in Brooklyn was the most important thoroughfare in town before the Bridge opened. All the principal retail stores were located there, F. Loeser & Co., S. Wechsler & Bros., now Abraham & Straus, formerly Wechsler & Abraham, and many others. Brooklyn's oldest store, Journey & Burnham on Atlantic Avenue when that was the principal street, finally went out of business. Adjoining the Fulton Ferry slip was "Jewell's Wharf," quite a famous stopping-off place in its day. All the Coney Island and Rockaway Boats stopped there and no end of Sunday School excursions started from it in summer. Finally, the Pennsylvania Railroad ran an annex line of boats connecting Brooklyn with its depot in Jersey City, so that Jewell's Wharf became one of the best-known spots in Brooklyn.



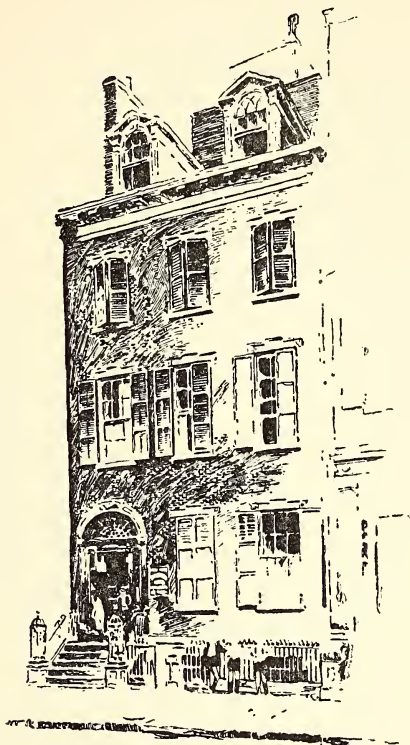
"Saddle-Rock Fry"—a Fulton Market oyster saloon.

Trolley car parties on gayly decorated cars with multi-colored lamps, in the near-by unoccupied reaches of Brooklyn and of the city stretching into Westchester and the Bronx, were another popular diversion, but were a later development. Some streets were specially attractive for aimless strolling, but, unfortunately, there are no pleasant walks about the river-fronts of our city, as there should be, like the embankments along the Thames or the Seine, which is a matter of regret. Still, along the East River above Fifty-ninth Street, the idea seems to be starting. So if I take you for a moment along some half-forgotten highways and byways, I cannot always lead my readers along the sunny roads of decorum and propriety. All big towns have their shady bypaths; not necessarily by virtue of umbrageous elms and oaks, but by a rather more sinister history.

In my salad days, Greene Street was one of these inviting tours. Greene Street, now a region of dingy, outworn warehouses and workshops, with only the old-world estate office of Sailors' Snug Harbor to suggest a more antique gentility, was in its earlier era inhabited by the gentry, but at the time of which I write, it was one of those streets in which Zola or Peter Arno might have made some interesting researches, but which, I regret to say, enlisted the attention of a great many others less altruistically inclined. Ladies, in various stages of *deshabille*, lolled at ground-floor windows and addressed male passers-by in familiar and sometimes endearing terms. In fact, the total absence of formality in this district was charming to many who were irked by the ceremonious etiquette of Washington Square and points north. I refer now to the Washington Square of Henry James and not to the present-day spaghetti squad of Macdougall Street.

Every old street is, in its way, a kind of palimpsest under whose visible writing one may find the record of earlier hands, and Greene Street is no exception. Its original complexion, as is known to all old New Yorkers, was one of exceptional—

may, ultra-fashionable character. It was then in the desirable St. John's Park section. In its palmy days, its better known residents included Benjamin Seixas, a son of the first presi-



NO. 36 BEACH STREET, NEW YORK.

Here John Ericsson, the immortal inventor of the Monitor, lived for more than a generation, and it was here he died.

dent of the New York Stock Exchange, who lived at 133; his brother, Nathan Seixas at 116; Dr. Markoe at 175; Montgomery Livingstone at 80; George Henriques at 120; Alexander Forbes at 201; W. S. Vanderbilt at 194, while within a

short walk, at No. 10 Washington Place, lived the great Commodore himself. Thompson Street, likewise, had the address of Dr. Valentine Mott, a famous surgeon in his day, at No. 185; No. 36 Clinton Place, now Eighth Street, was the domicile of C. A. Hecksher, and 39 that of Eliza Cruger. At 42 lived Edward Minturn, at 21 Mrs. Cutting, at 20 E. A. Duyckinck, the historian. On Fourth Street lived Park Godwin at 331, Peter Gilsey at 338, Anson Livingston at 314. Bleeker Street boasted Dr. Delafield at 108; Benjamin Nathan, president of the Stock Exchange, and victim of one of the most celebrated murders in New York's criminal history, who lived at 153, adjoining the noted Depan Row, where at No. 6 lived no less a personage than A. T. Stewart, before his marble palace was built on Fifth Avenue. The rapid fortunes of the California trade and the enormously augmented profiteering of the Civil War hastened the development of Fifth Avenue and the disintegration of St. John's Park, Stuyvesant Square and other strongholds of wealth and social position, in what was probably the swiftest decadence of any neighborhood in local history. The region we have just passed through became first a slum and then a shabby early "garment center." In recent years, however, the city has turned in its tracks and there are indications, in the "walk to your work" movements, that this one time "silk-stocking" district may again renew in some degree its former residential amenities.

CHAPTER XX

Sable Harlem, the Great Blizzard, and the Fighting Rich

ADJACENT to this region was another legendary section, the Black Belt of that period. Of course, it had not the huge population of contemporary sable Harlem—was only, if I may so term it, a baby belt; but South Fifth Avenue, Thompson Street and Sullivan Street, with patches of Bleecker Street, were a very fair (!) nucleus of Lenox and Seventh and had some of the “attractions” of that delectable faubourg. There was the “Burnt Rag” and the “Black and Tan” on Bleecker Street, which were a contemporary “police problem.” Nobody ever went to these places to hear spirituals or the translated music of the Congo and other African musical centers. Students of “rhythm” made pilgrimages for inspiration to Christy’s Minstrels and later to Jack Haverly’s or Thatcher, Primrose and West.

Of course, our colored population had not then made the remarkable progress in the arts and industries that they have since then developed. But I think that something has been lost in the resulting sophistication. The old Negro was enormously amusing, and the Amos ’n’ Andy of today were multiplied in the comparatively insignificant racial population of the past. Perhaps the passing of the “nigger minstrels” had something to do with it. I cannot remember Dockstader or Billy Emerson or any of that legendary corps of the “black art” ever cracking a Scotch joke. There was a wilderness of darkey humor to explore in the naïve and lazy traditions of the race. No “comic strip” of today’s journalism has anything

on "The Thompson Street Poker Club," "The Darktown Fire Brigade," and "The Lime-Kiln Club" of Currier & Ives, and I, for one, would trade any number of spiritual choruses for the quaint loquacity of the Kalsomine man, "The Whistling Coons," or the melodious chant of that most charming of sable nightingales, the hot-corn vendor.

Coney Island in those days gave not the slightest indication of what it was ultimately destined to be. And Rockaway was so far distant as to have only an occasional visitor. Yet Rockaway a dozen years before was quite a famous resort and was fairly entitled to be called fashionable in the best and most elegant sense of the word. Old New York families went to Rockaway each summer as religiously as their heirs and assigns now go to Southampton. Long Island is an old settled community and many of its villages have a long and historic career behind them. John Howard Payne's home is still standing in East Hampton and I believe one or two old Dutch windmills still survive. So it was quite natural that Rockaway should be our first officially recognized Summer Capital. But the great hotel at Rockaway, patronized almost exclusively by New York's old families, burned down one summer and was never rebuilt—Long Branch taking advantage of Rockaway's disaster to blossom forth as a formidable rival. As Rockaway was always difficult to reach, the easier means of transportation to the Jersey Coast started that section on its present successful career, which has continued ever since. In its early days, Long Branch was a beautiful place. Afterwards came horse racing, great gambling establishments, and many of the better sort of people commenced migrating elsewhere.

The question of where to spend the summer had none of the importance that attaches to it today. You generally went to your relations in the country and protested loudly when they returned the compliment in the winter. Vacations were not yet considered an absolute necessity. Offices and manu-

facturing plants still worked the full ten hours on Saturdays as other days, many retail stores celebrating the week-end by keeping open till ten o'clock. Gradually, a few merchants closed a little earlier on Saturday and by slow and easy stages the half day quietly took a permanent place in our scheme of things. But that half day at first was portioned off among the clerks, each taking turns at keeping the store or office open while the majority went off.

The idea of a whole week off at a time, was one of gradual growth. We had no such ideas as prevail today regarding hygiene in offices, the virtue of rest and the value of vitamins. It was largely a matter of grind, grind, grind all the time. Still, the idea was born and as business men prospered, the cost of vacations appeared less formidable and began to grow in favor as its wholesome effect on employees was noticed. A firm giving vacations was held in higher regard than one that didn't. And so the idea spread. But it was many years before the streets took on the deserted appearance that is now characteristic of them today at week-ends in summer. As if to quiet consciences for these lapses from grace, camp meetings sprang up all over the country. That seemed to provide an adequate excuse for loafing in the country. So long as you were engaged in nurturing your spiritual life, that seemed a justifiable reason for neglecting business. So the combination was successful till the people tired of harmless deception and decided to take a holiday without any subterfuge. And the time devoted to recreation steadily advanced from one week to ten days and then two weeks. While it has remained stationary at that period for some years, there is an increasing tendency to lengthen that period and three weeks to a month is not now an isolated instance.

Winter vacations were not dreamed of till decades after the period I am writing about. Coronado Beach, California, was probably the scene of the first innovation of this hitherto unheard-of dissipation. The Atlantic Seaboard was, as yet, un-

thought of for this purpose, and it was many years before North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and New Orleans were even considered in this connection. California was not only better known, but had the enterprise to put up suitable accommodations for the wealthy and the fame of these Western caravansaries soon traveled to the East.

Henry M. Flagler, at that time seeking some sort of pleasant distraction from the irksomeness of the oil business, suddenly determined to develop Florida, and started in with two magnificent structures, the Ponce de Leon in St. Augustine and the Alcazar in Palm Beach. It was to the former that President Cleveland took his bride on his honeymoon. Yet strange to relate, in this magnificent hotel of over three hundred rooms, there were only fourteen with baths. For the rest, the public shower was all that could be had.

Florida today, however, rivals the Riviera in Europe and is only at her beginning, despite her setback from unwise booming.

The telephone girl was probably the first woman in the commercial world who escaped the charge of taking a man's job away from him, for from almost the very beginning, "operator" has been of the feminine gender. In those days, the girls spoke common or garden English, or what sounded like it, and their elocution was devoid of the "nye-un," "thr-r-r-ee," "fie-ev" of the A. T. & T. dictionary.

A topic that was a subject of conversation for many many years was the Great Blizzard which suddenly descended upon the City without warning in the middle of March in 1888. I am not a close student of meteorological records, but think I am safe in saying that nothing equal in intensity, fatalities and general all-round devastation has ever since been experienced by New York. The present generation can form no idea of the havoc wrought by the howling gale, that avalanche of snow, and the freezing temperature that accompanied it. I believe there is now a Society of the Great Blizzard in ex-

istence, the members of which like myself were caught in that terrible storm and were among those fortunate enough to escape without serious consequences. One citizen who lived in the Seventies and resided but a short block or two from the Ninth Avenue Elevated, became bewildered by the blasts, wandered around aimlessly and finally sank down in the snow to perish within a few yards of his home where warmth and shelter awaited him.

Elevated trains stalled on their tracks. On Sixth Avenue, extension ladders were employed in one instance to rescue the marooned and frozen passengers. The descent was by no means unattended with danger, but happily there were no casualties.

Some hardy citizens of superb health and who were in the habit of walking from their homes to their offices downtown, suffered severely. Most of these fortunately decided that for one day discretion was the better part of valor. They had reason to congratulate themselves on their decision when they attempted the heretofore short walk to the Elevated. Street cars had, of course, ceased to run. Many of them returned completely exhausted, while others were compelled to seek refuge in the first house they could reach. Senator Roscoe Conkling, one of the best known citizens and about as perfect a specimen of physical manhood as there was in New York, reached Madison Square after the walk from the financial district. That was his daily practice and a storm was not to be allowed to interfere with his daily routine. He lived at the Hoffman House. Instead of bearing to the left at Twenty-third Street and continuing along Broadway, he walked straight ahead into Madison Square. Here he became confused and lost all sense of direction. How long he had wandered aimlessly around the Park he never knew. He was fortunately seen and rescued. But the exposure was too much for even a man of his robust physique, and he contracted pneumonia from which he died a few days later. How many

other deaths directly due to the same experience by others was of course never known, but the toll was heavy.

Every hotel that night was crowded and you were lucky to get a chair, a cot or even a space on the floor to rest till morning. There were, of course, no telephones to speak of and all telegraph wires were down. Messengers could not be had for love or money. So thousands of families spent that night in an agony of fear and suspense.

Dozens of local trains from commuting sections were stalled on their tracks. The passengers suffered acutely, as presently the heat gave out. There was no steam in the engine and fuel for the stove which supplied most of the warmth in those days, was soon exhausted. Some of these trains were not located for two or three days and most of the passengers were in a bad way for want of food.

In most of the streets snow piled up against the houses, hiding the front stoop completely. It ran from four to ten feet deep according to the direction of the wind, which formed at some places drifts of even greater depth. For several days one walked through high banks of snow on every street. When the snow was finally shoveled into huge piles in the streets, these miniature mountains soon blossomed with ironical signs giving fancy locations to the mounds—Mount Blanc, St. Moritz, "Baldface," Bunker Hill, together with kindly observations regarding the Department of Street Cleaning which had apparently disappeared from the face of the earth.

The storm disappeared as suddenly as it came and the next day the sun shone as brightly and warm as on a May morning. But it was the end of the second day ere the City began to show real life again. All business in the meantime was completely suspended and it was more than a week before the City's transportation approached the normal. The loss in life was never accurately estimated, but it was heavy and indirectly it was the cause of many other deaths.

For months the papers contained odds and ends about the

storm that related many almost unbelievable happenings. Fortunately, the rise in temperature due to the approaching Spring continued and what could never have been accomplished by man—the complete removal of the snow—was mercifully removed by Nature herself. I have witnessed almost every severe storm in New York since that memorable Blizzard, and I can truthfully say that none of them were anything but child's play compared with that terrible visitation, the Blizzard of '88.

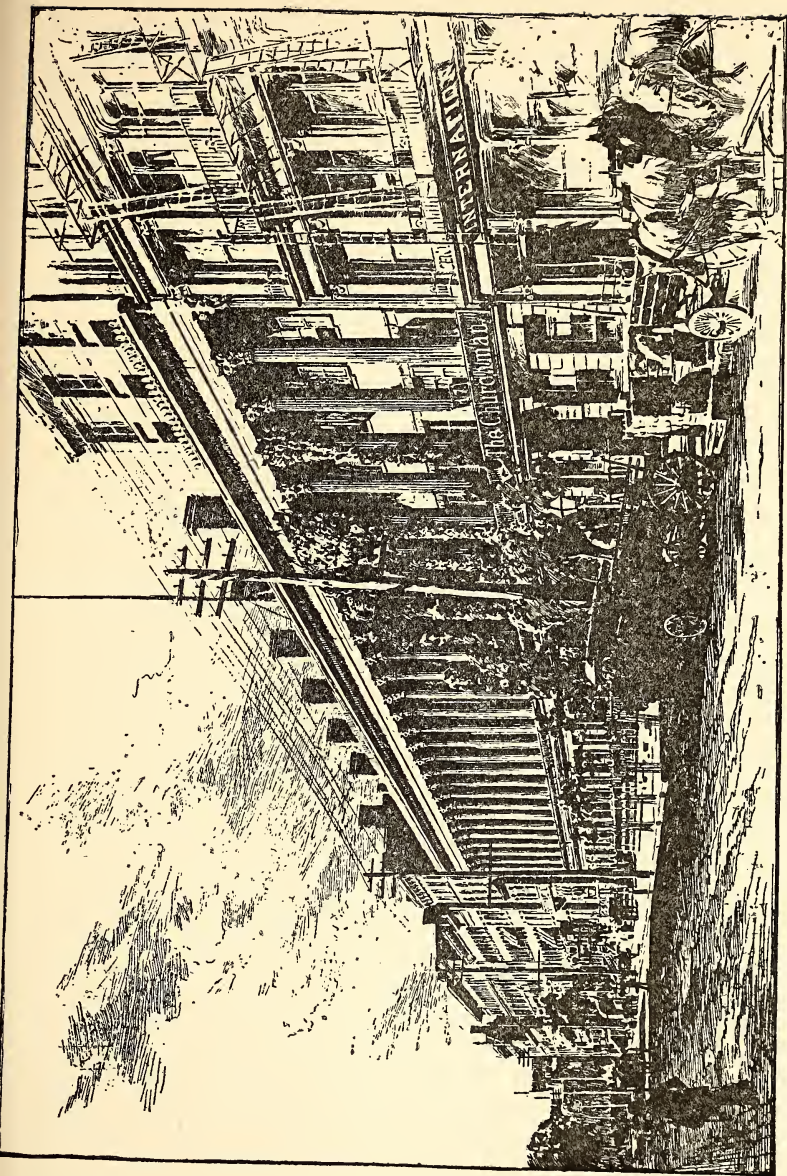
The 'gos were not only gay, but golden. This era in Wall Street saw the banking business for the first time, forsaking the heretofore monopolistic avenues of finance, such as railroads which were supposed to be, when built, free from competition to a great extent. In fact, that had been the theory and practice of all railroad building, and it was not until Senator Brice built a road from Chicago to New York, paralleling the great Vanderbilt System, that any predatory road of this sort had ever been attempted. In time, of course, Brice managed to unload the West Shore on the Vanderbilts and it cost the latter a pretty penny. It also proved to investors that a railroad bond was not necessarily the one safe investment on earth, as they had been reared to believe, and it also made the bankers think. It destroyed their hitherto sacred fetish that only railroad securities were worthy of their attention. A certain oil company had also been able to grow up without the aid of banking capital and its securities now ranked higher in the financial world than any railroad's on the list. So the bankers began to look into the industrial field as it was called, and presently began an era of combinations, amalgamations and mergers that opened up a new and tremendously big field for fresh exploration.

For some years it had been known that Andrew Carnegie was anxious to retire from his immense business responsibilities, but there was no other firm in business at the time able to take over the Carnegie organization. A rumpus with the

Pennsylvania Railroad over freight rates brought a threat from Carnegie to build an independent line to the seaboard. Mr. Rockefeller was also having the same kind of trouble. There was talk at one time of a merger of the steel people with the oil people, and such a combination would mean a drastic rate war which would affect not only Pennsylvania stocks but New York Central and others as well. The security market grew nervous.

A Western crowd headed by a couple of clever young lawyers in Chicago, the Moore Brothers, suddenly discovered the possibilities of this new development and began their practiced hand in Trust-making by organizing the Diamond Match Company, which proved a fizzle at first but ultimately became a success. They made the acquaintance of a hustling young barbed-wire salesman at about this time named John W. Gates—"Bet-a-Million" Gates, as he later became known. Starting with the wire branch of the steel business, they enlarged their operations to include several important steel mills, and the Federal Steel Company was added to the American Wire Company. They were able to pay good dividends on the huge amount of stock they issued and were much emboldened by their success and followed it up by the formation of a Tin Plate Trust, and later on by the American Can Company. Quite a record in a few years for two hitherto unknown lawyers.

In the meantime, Carnegie stood pat, when suddenly the financial world gasped with astonishment at the announcement of the formation of a billion dollar company—United States Steel Corporation—formed by J. P. Morgan & Company around the Carnegie business which Charley Schwab had sold to Morgan for five hundred millions in bonds and several hundred more millions in cash. When Mr. Morgan rounded out his plan, it was disclosed that it included the Federal Steel Company and all its subsidiaries, besides numerous ore mines, coke ovens, etc. etc. It was a gigantic accomplishment



Lafayette Place, New York, 1890.

and placed J. P. Morgan & Company at the head of private bankers the world over.

The next great coup was the Tobacco Trust. The germ of a combination among cigarette manufacturers originated in the brain of an employee of a trade publication—Charles Allen, I think the name was. He was constantly adjusting disputes among the various manufacturers regarding trade-marks, brands, etc. etc. He saved the several firms much time and money in these amicable settlements and finally suggested one huge organization to control the entire industry. Oudin and Oakley, an unknown law firm at the time, handled the project which at first was a small one. The Duke factories at that time on their letterheads were bragging that they had a capital of \$600,000.

The original merger included only W. Duke Sons & Company who received \$7,500,000 in stock and the presidency of the Company for Mr. J. B. Duke, the head of the firm. Kinney Bros. came next, then Allen and Ginter of Richmond, Marburg Bros. of Baltimore and Goodwin & Company of New York. The main business of the new Company was cigarettes. Plug and Pipe Smoking were afterthoughts.

Lorillard, now Liggett & Myers, were in the original group. A disagreement between William H. Butler, secretary of Kinney, who thought he should have been president of the new company, finally broke out in open rupture. Mr. Butler had handled the firm's Wall Street manipulations and came to know Thos. F. Ryan, then a hustling young broker from Richmond. With the assistance of the Widener crowd in Philadelphia, they formed the Union Tobacco Company and purchased "Bull Durham," a popular smoking tobacco which was managed by P. S. Hill for General Carr in Philadelphia. They then got hold of Liggett & Myers of St. Louis, a huge plug tobacco concern.

A tobacco war was imminent, but that was never in Mr. Ryan's mind for an instant. By means of the Union Tobacco

Company, he got hold of the American, placing Duke at the head. Butler was out. Lorillard soon after capitulated and the present organization was completed. Additions and extensions have since followed—the formation of the Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada, the British American Tobacco Company of London, etc.—all tremendously wealthy and successful concerns.

Other great figures arose in Wall Street, notably James Stillman, who took a comparatively unknown bank—the City National—and made it the largest of the institutions on the Street. The present J. P. Morgan was connected with the bank in a minor capacity. Most of his life had been spent in London and he was not so prominent in New York as abroad. It was not until the death of his father that his latent power developed. While the handling of the finances of the Steel Corporation required great ability, the handling of the finances and purchases for Mr. Allen in the World War was infinitely a greater task. Mr. Morgan venerates his father's memory and any comparison showing him in a favorable light to his father is very distasteful to him.

Wall Street in those days around the Morgan corner held more of the world's financial celebrities than any other city in the world. The Stock Exchange is just across the street from Morgan's as is also the U. S. Sub-Treasury. A dozen of the most important banks are within a stone's throw.

The Morgan building at that time was an old-fashioned bank, an iron affair built and owned originally by Anthony J. Drexel of Philadelphia. The firm name over the door in heavy block stone letters was Drexel, Morgan & Company. Strange to relate, the basement was occupied by a firm of coal dealers, Jeremiah Skidmore's Sons, and a small shop where watches were repaired. The banking firm occupied the first floor reached by a flight of stone steps. The rest of the premises were sublet as offices to lawyers, brokers or anyone else who could pay the rent. Originally it had no elevator, but

toward the end it boasted of an asthmatic contraption, started and stopped by a steel cable. The elder Morgan made no particular impression on the banking world as a young man. He did not join the famous banking firm of his father in London, but accepted an apparently modest position with Duncan, Sherman & Company, a firm unknown to finance. His name as part of a firm first appears in 1891 as Dobney Morgan & Company, dealers in Investment Securities. A year or two later, he joined the New York branch of Drexel & Company, Philadelphia, and the new firm is known as Drexel, Morgan & Company, Mr. Drexel erecting a building on the site of their present location. In his middle thirties he began to show the metal he was made of, but his great coup—the Steel Company—was not accomplished till the time when most men have retired—he was sixty-four.

Both father and son had one trait in common—a deep-seated aversion to publicity and particularly to photographs; and yet each, as the years rolled on, experienced a change in heart in this respect. Both of them smashed cameras more than once. Both lived to see the day when they faced the camera with smiles.

While the offices of the senior Morgan were often the scene of many important meetings, it could not compare with what the Library saw on Thirty-ninth Street. This was where the great conferences were held, and where many incipient panics were averted. This little building has at times held groups within it who actually, not figuratively, held the country in the hollow of their hands. For these were the days before the Federal Reserve and when the money power was in the hands of a few "benevolent despots," as Untermeyer called them. If the walls of this old building could speak, they could tell stories that would put to blush many a so-called "thriller" which would turn out to be mush and milk by comparison.

Mr. Morgan had a few very intimate cronies—men whom

he liked aside from business. "Jim" Hill was one of them, Phil Armour another, George F. Baker a third, and Frederick Schumacher a fourth. Although a Connecticut man, he was much attached to the city which has always been his home, and many a member of an old New York family on that score alone has benefited by it. In the world of finance, he was an absolute monarch. He was a product of his day and generation, and there will never be another like him. He passed away in Rome, city of the Cæsars and a fitting place for the exit of a modern Alexander.

A strange figure on the street, and one of the most remarkable and yet about whom little has been written, was John Sterling, personal lawyer and mentor to John D. Rockefeller, James Stillman, and a dozen others equally prominent. He was an old-time shipowner of the '40s. There was a rumor that early in life he was a gay blade and fell in love with a reigning beauty. That must have been about the time that Second Avenue and St. John's Park were the regions of wealth and fashion. At all events, so the story goes, she refused him and Sterling remained a bachelor all his life. He was not, however, immune to the charms of the fair sex and he looked after about sixty aged women whom he kept in an old ladies' home in Rye. Some client had wished the Institution on him and John Sterling was true to his trust to the end. No matter how urgent the demand for his services nor how valuable his time might be, Saturdays always found him up at Rye counting the pots and pans and seeing that everything was all snug and tight, Bristol fashion, in the old ladies' home. I suppose those old ladies must have wondered many a time who that old-fashioned gentleman was who came to see them so regularly, and who was so fussy about everything.

His private office was easily the most poverty-stricken one, so far as furnishings went, of any in the Street. There was one small deal table in it, a couple of shabby chairs and a hat-rack. Yet in that shabby little room, more important conclu-

sions were reached, more momentous decisions made, than in any of the manufacturing law offices of today. When he died he left some twenty millions to Yale, his Alma Mater. No more singular character ever appeared in Wall Street; he shunned publicity and was never interviewed. But his clients included the most powerful, the most important figures in all the realm of business.

The tall, æsthetic-looking man with graying stubby mustache is James Stillman, alias the National City Bank. Mr. Stillman came to the bank when it occupied the old-fashioned residence house at 52 Wall Street. The old iron railings, going up the stoop to the entrance of the old house, still remained part of the old bank till it vacated the premises to move across the street and occupy the old Custom House which had moved to its new building at the foot of Broadway. When alterations were completed, it was regarded as the finest banking house in the Street.

It was probably the Rockefeller business that made the National City—that and the personality of James Stillman himself. No doubt, the wise counsel of John Sterling was also a factor. The two were the closest of friends and the day was not a day till they had exchanged good-night greetings ere putting out the light.

A strange reticent man was Stillman. Perhaps the strangest thing he did was suddenly to decide to end his days in a foreign land, France. It was then disclosed that his home life had been unhappy and that he had lived apart from Mrs. Stillman most of his life. There certainly was a Nemesis hovering over the domestic affairs of the family. It seems quite true that mere riches do not guarantee happiness.

But of all the picturesque figures who made Wall Street a cynosure of all eyes in those days, the son of an obscure minister in Long Island easily occupied first place—Edward H. Harriman, builder of the Union Pacific.

This historic old road had figured sensationally in pre-

war days as one of the greatest gambles in the Stock Market. Much of the stock was held in England and in its early days it had been a good money-maker. It superseded the Pony



Interior of a Pullman car, smoking saloon, 1876.

Express and the Overland Stage from Omaha to the Pacific. It still had some rolling stock, a roadbed—and in Harriman's opinion a tremendous future. The stock was then selling around five or ten dollars a share.

The story of the regeneration of this road is one of the romances of railroading. When Harriman's rehabilitation was complete, earnings began to climb. In about less time than it takes to tell, the stock was paying 10 per cent *plus* and was quoted around a hundred and fifty. Then came the struggle for control of the Northern Pacific, which Harriman needed for some expansion he had in mind. If Jacob Schiff had carried out Harriman's instructions to buy fifty thousand shares at the time he wanted them, the Morgan forces would have been caught napping, so it is said, and there would have been no Northern Pacific "corner." Schiff refused to make the purchase till too late and the rumpus was on—with the old Giant Morgan idling on the banks of the Nile where a stone from the sling-shot of David found him and hit him low.

Mr. Harriman was far from a mere speculator. Whatever profit his stock holdings showed, was by reason of increased earnings which the policy and ability of Harriman produced out of the roads themselves. The public who bought his stocks as an investment soon came to realize that a Harriman stock was a good stock to own outright, but a poor stock to buy on margin.

Harriman tried hard at first to interest Morgan in his scheme. He failed. His only comment was, "Guess I wasn't feeling just right." He then turned to Kuhn, Loeb & Company and found a sympathetic listener in Jacob Schiff, a member of the firm and a son-in-law of the senior founder, Solomon Loeb. They became bankers to the Union Pacific. The health of Mr. Harriman, never a very robust man, began to break under the terrific strain he put upon it, and long before his time he passed on. He was always a builder-up,

never a destroyer; and as such he is held in affectionate remembrance.

Jacob Schiff, his closest friend, rose to an enviable position among the people of New York. He was loyal to his ancient Faith and did much for the Jews of his adopted city. Few men were more highly thought of, and his wise counsel was sought after in many affairs.

Through their connection with the Union Pacific, the firm prospered, which enabled Mr. Schiff to expand his philanthropies in several directions. Always a serious-minded man and deeply religious, Mr. Schiff was among our really great personages in the business world. His unscrambling of the finances of such a mixed-up corporation as the Union Pacific, revealed him as a master of detail and a wizard in administration. He was an admirable foil for the impetuous and headstrong Harriman. It was a great combination.

Of Otto Kahn, it can be said that his responsibilities and duties came first. An ardent lover of music, Mr. Kahn was a staunch supporter of the Metropolitan. There is no doubt that his plan for a new Opera House in the new Rockefeller Center was a logical development in the life of this institution, and no doubt it would have been realized but for the obstinate opposition of an influential group headed by R. Fulton Cutting. Now that both are gone, steps may yet be taken to supplant that moth-eaten old relic on Fortieth Street for a building commensurate with the importance of operatic music in New York and in keeping with the wealth and culture of the city.

The original Rockefeller brothers, John and William, were seldom seen on the streets of the financial district—John never. The Standard Oil came from Cleveland in 1871 and opened their first offices in an obscure building on Pearl Street near Wall. I was in it a few years ago. The cheap wooden partition that separated John D.'s personal corner from the general office was still there. It was an old build-

ing and never was a costly one. But that is where the first million-dollar firm opened its doors. They now occupy a



Interior of a Pullman car, the parlor, 1876.

magnificent building of their own at 26 Broadway. At that time it was much smaller—very much—than the present structure, which actually extends from 26 Broadway to Beaver Street and includes probably a dozen numbers.

The original building, however, was quite luxurious for those days. It had excellent elevator service and was substantially built with heavy mahogany woodwork everywhere. It had every requisite for convenience and comfort within its own doors, including a well-equipped and well-stocked restaurant. In those days, the oil officials who traveled much would take a fancy to this or that Pullman porter and give him a job as attendant in one of their numerous offices. That is why you see so many colored men around the Standard Oil building. They seem to be very polite and efficient; evidently hand-picked.

So Mr. Rockefeller, Sr. had little occasion to go outside his own bailiwick once he reached it, and there were not any people that he needed to call on. He would occasionally be encountered hatless in one of the numerous elevators in the course of the day going from one department to another. And he had his frugal lunch of milk and crackers in the company's private restaurant. His brother, William, was more often seen. He was a regular attendant at the Tuesday board meetings of the National City Bank of which he was a director and one of the largest stockholders. He was also interested in other boards whose meetings also took him to the Street. Young John D., Jr. had not yet appeared on the scene—at least, in a big way.

Other important Standard Oil Chiefs included H. H. Rogers, John D. Archbold, Walter Jennings, George D. and Herbert L. Pratt, H. M. Flagler, Edward L. Harkness, J. A. Bostwick and some others. With the exception of H. H. Rogers, they were seldom in the public eye, holding down closely their jobs in the Company. Mr. Flagler retired and started in to develop Florida.

He was rather a good-looking man personally, though by no means a fop. He had rare constructive ability and in modern Florida has left a magnificent monument.

None of the Vanderbilts were ever seen on the Street those days. Whatever errands had to be done fell to the lot of Chauncey Depew. Perhaps William H. may have been in Morgan's office when he arranged to sell a hundred and twenty-five thousand shares of N. Y. Central in London, but I'm not sure. The old Commodore in his day was a familiar enough figure, but the sons were rarely seen. George J. Gould had an office at 165 Broadway, which he rarely left. He did not inherit his father's ability as a speculator or money-maker. Frank played around with Dillingham, the musical comedy manager, but developed no taste for business. Edwin was very retiring; Howard was more in the papers than was good for him, but never in connection with any weighty business enterprise. Old Phil Armour used to come to town frequently, drop into the office of a religious weekly he supported, leave a fat check to carry on and then go down to the Street to get enough to make it good without having to use any old money. Mr. Armour was a very able man—one of the ablest of them all. He, "Jim" Hill, and Mr. Morgan were "cronies."

James J. Hill, president of the Northern Pacific, and who was everywhere known as "Jim," was one of the most picturesque characters that ever was on the Street. He was a practical railroad man and could lay a rail with the best of them. He would build a section of the road and make it earn a dividend on the bonds it cost; then he would proceed with the next section. When he was "on location" in the early days, he worked with pick and shovel or acted as foreman if needed. He was a fine man in the best sense of the word and built his road through a howling wilderness and lived to see his dream of Empire come true.

The Stock Exchange was one of the sights of the city and

strangers were always taken to see it. No tickets of admission were needed. Trinity Church at the head of the Street was open every day. On Good Friday a special noonday service was held at which some eminent divine would officiate. In that way Dean Stanley of Westminster Abbey, Bishop Brooks of Boston, Bishop Potter of New York, and nearly every man of prominence in the Episcopal Church, was heard at these special Lenten services held at noon.

Occasionally, a funeral of some old New Yorker having a vault in Trinity Church would bring down a contingent of old New Yorkers and many prominent in Society to mingle for a moment with the hurrying throngs on Broadway. It usually attracted a crowd, as the music was fine and the ringing of the chimes gave notice of something unusual.

Quite a number of eminent members of the Bar had their offices on or near Wall Street. Evarts, Southmayd & Choate were among the most prominent. The diminutive, gaunt features of Senator Evarts, with his old beaver high hat, senior member of this firm, fresh from his Genoa Award victory; Joseph H. Choate, the greatest after-dinner speaker of his day; Robert W. de Forrest, president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and of De Forrest Bros.; ex-President Cleveland, Tracy, Stetson & Bangs; ex-Judge Howland; Stewart L. Woodford; Roscoe Conkling (who perished soon after the Great Blizzard); District Attorney Jerome; De Lancey Nicoll, S. D. T. Todd of the Standard Oil, and dozens of others were frequently encountered. Gen. U. S. Grant, while a member of that unfortunate firm, Grant & Ward, was a frequent visitor and always excited great interest as he entered his office. And any distinguished visitor such as a Russian Grand Duke, Prince Henry, or a foreign soldier of renown was sure to be taken downtown by one or another of his friends to see the most famous street in America. Uncle Russell Sage was always pointed out, Jay Gould, James R. Keene, Thos. F. Ryan, Henry Clews, Frank Work.

The great ironmasters, Carnegie, Schwab and Frick, were occasionally seen, but not often. It is not possible, of course, to include within the limited space at my command a complete list of all the well-known people seen in the financial district in the golden '90s. I have tried to recall the most outstanding figures and the most interesting names of the period. Already many have almost ceased to be remembered and a new set of names is in the making. But the list, short as it is, will no doubt bring back stirring memories to those who like myself were of that day and generation.

CHAPTER XXI

The Social Register and Some Serious Occurrences

EARLY as it was in our National life there had already appeared indications of a desire in certain quarters to be what we now know as "Social Registerites." The publication of Washington Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, in which the Dutch are made the victims of Irving's good-natured though perfectly accurate satirization of the early Dutch burghers, created a tremendous sensation at the time, and the gentle saga of "Sleepy Hollow" came in for a terrific barrage of criticism and abuse. His portrait, however, of the Dutch régime is in the main correct. The artistic license occasionally used by the gifted writer, in which he purposely exaggerates the National shortcomings of these stolid people, in no wise detracts from whatever credit to which they are entitled. Being practically British himself, Irving quite naturally looked upon the Dutch occupations of New York as a huge joke. But, of course, the descendants of the few settlers who had remained here, and who had profited immensely by the enhanced value of the generous-sized farms bequeathed them by their ancestors, naturally resented Irving's amusing description of these legendary worthies and set up a vociferous wail of protest. Most of them, however, were half or three-quarters English by this time, so the irritation was soon lost sight of in the subsequent fame which came to Irving, who remained a staunch New Yorker to the end.

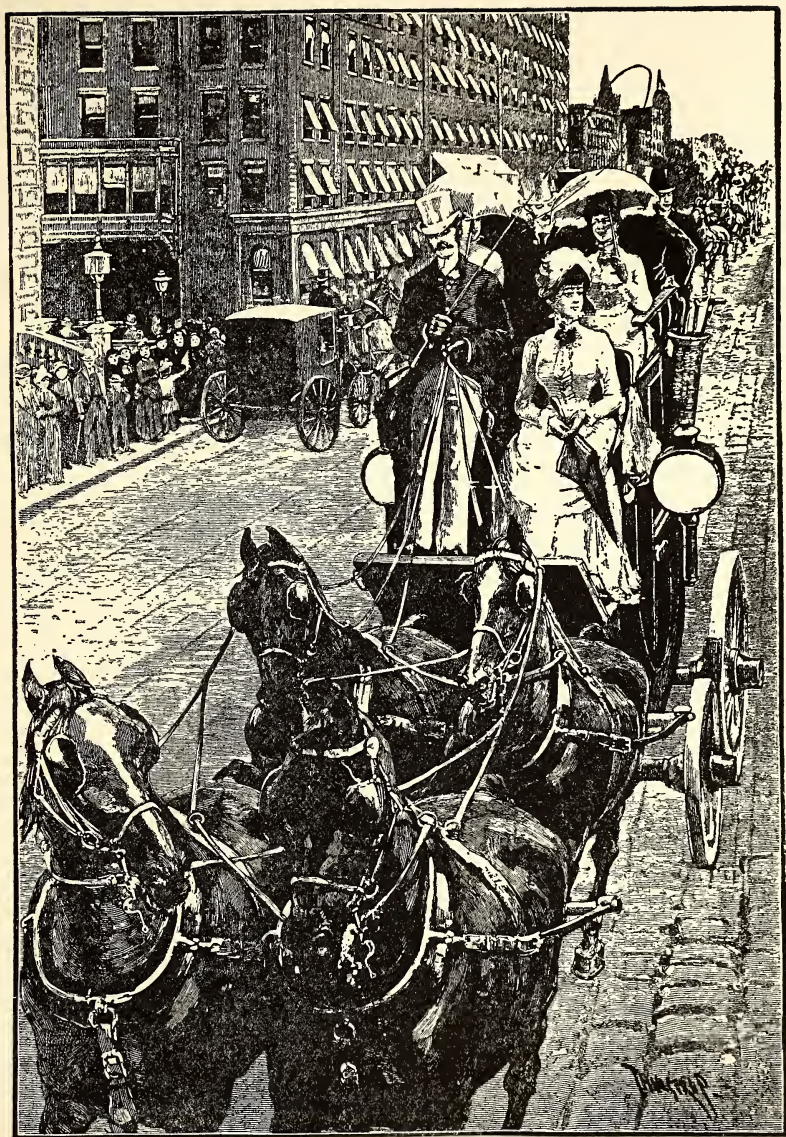
It would be quite possible up to the age of steam—1835—to count all the families in New York who owned their own

carriages. That was the accepted credential that permitted you to be a social registerite of those days. With the enormous changes in our social fabric that began with steam, and our rapidly expanding national wealth, due to the opening of vast domains hitherto inaccessible, all exclusive social distinctions became more and more difficult to maintain. Yet there remains today in New York a class of society in which family and not worth is the only open sesame. It may not be admitted that such a clique exists. Its members are not banded together; they do not sound their praises from the house-tops. But try to enter without proper background and see what happens.

There have always been certain things in New York that constituted what is known in the best sense as "Society." Away back before the Revolution it was Trinity Church, Kings College, the Society Library and the Society of the New York Hospitals, and after the Revolution the New York Historical Society. Although John Pritchard's organization was not formally chartered till 1804, a preliminary group had existed many years before. This is a short list, but it is all there is of real Old New York.

The knowledge that such a coterie exists, has always been recognized in New York. The desire to codify it—to set apart the sheep from the goats, has never come from any initiative on the part of this group. They have ever been a law unto themselves and utterly callous to outside opinion. But the existence of such a circle and the great curiosity to know who actually compose it resulted in 1870 in the compilation of the first issue of the most heartbreaking publication in New York—the *Social Register*.

When a girl got a job in the telephone company in the '80s, she received a temporary appointment for six months in which to learn the business, during which period she received \$3 a week; that is, if she was very circumspect, and pleased the superintendent, who was empowered to discharge her at



Parade of the New York Coaching Club, 1885.

will. Once passed the probationary stage, however, she could be discharged only for cause. The main cause was for flirting over the wires and making dates; a minor cause was for being "pert" to subscribers, according to the manager of the Cortlandt Street Exchange, then the New York Headquarters. The girls who came at seven in the morning got away at



WALL TELEPHONE, 1884.

"Hello! Santa Claus!"

five; those at eight left at six, and so on, day and night. At noon you would see every other girl leave her place and go down to the dining-room for her luncheon. The girl next to her took charge of her place in her absence. *The work was not apt to be heavy, as all New York lunched between twelve and two o'clock.* The highest wages paid to a girl at the switchboard was \$10 a week. "Bless their dear hearts," said a lady visitor to the exchange, "I ought to congratulate them

instead of sympathizing with them. They look so healthy and so happy and are paid twice as much as the average shop-girl. Besides, they are so protected here."

"Although the telephone system is still almost an infant," said the manager, "it is rapidly becoming universally recognized as an important part of the general machinery of business. Only a few weeks ago a subscriber, whose wife had scarlet fever and was quarantined in the upper story of the house, had a telephone put by her bed and one in his library, and for six weeks they communicated with each other in this way."

The Telephone Company commenced business in a top loft in Cortlandt Street. They had a desperate struggle for existence at first. There is still a firm on that street that has the distinction of once refusing them credit for a small printing job amounting to fifteen dollars. The headquarters of the Company remain in the same neighborhood to this day.

In the '70s before the advent of Stanford White, Madison Square Garden was a sad spectacle. For years, it was a huge barn-like structure and performed the dual function of depot for the Harlem line of steam cars and later on as a barn for the Fourth Avenue horse cars. It had now added another character to its rôle and was appearing as the headquarters of Barnum's Circus and the justly famous band brought together by Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore. For many years, Gilmore's Band was part of New York, and in the summertime he was a great attraction at the Oriental Hotel, Manhattan Beach, where, with the renowned Levy, the cornetist, he entertained many thousands every season.

After Stanford White had razed the old Garden and had reared upon its site a charming structure in the Spanish School, reproducing the Towers of Seville, it took its place as one of the show buildings of the city. New York had readily risen to its feet in appreciation of the genius of White, and when his beautiful Washington Arch reared its loveli-

ness on lower Fifth Avenue, we began to think there was such a thing as beauty in buildings, after all, and the name of Stanford White was on every tongue.

A superb office building, erected by a large insurance company, now occupies the site of the Spanish garden erected by White, and on a spot that might correspond with a window looking out on Twenty-fourth Street, just east of Madison Avenue, one can almost visualize White, in evening dress, slumped in the chair where he died.

His partner, Charles McKim, soon after followed White to the grave. His funeral was at old Trinity, and all of New York that was worth while was there to pay a last tribute to his memory. A more distinguished gathering has seldom been seen, even in that historic edifice famous for its final ceremonies to more distinguished personages than any other building in the country.

One of the events about this time was the great *Westfield* disaster which occurred July 11, 1881. That was a Staten Island ferryboat whose boilers blew up shortly after she left her slip. She was heavily loaded and the sad part was that the violence of the explosion blew many persons into the water and killed scores on the deck. No such frightful disaster had occurred in years. The late Billy Muldoon, ex-Boxing Commissioner, was then on the Police Force and told me about it. He immediately joined the rescuing party. They got as many Whitehall boats as they could and rowed to the sinking *Westfield*. Hundreds were in the water. Scores were frightfully injured. For twenty-four hours these boats picked up fragments of human bodies—heads, arms, legs, feet, etc. These were loaded in boats and taken to the Morgue at Bellevue which was soon over-crowded.

The next day, July 12th, brought another catastrophe—the riot between the Orangemen and the Irish. This occurred on Eighth Avenue. These two rival clans had transported an Old World feud to New York. The Fenians threw bricks

from the roof of the houses on the marching ranks of the Orangemen and soon a full-size bloody war was in progress. The State Militia were called to the scene. Their rifles were supposed to be loaded with blank cartridges, but by mistake regular bullets were substituted. Under these circumstances, the order to fire should have been withheld. It wasn't and more than thirty innocent bystanders were killed and hundreds wounded. When these bodies were added to the already over-crowded Morgue, Muldoon says the sight was terrible. They lay around everywhere, and anywhere. The police worked twenty-five and thirty hours at a stretch trying to get some sort of order out of chaos, but it was practically impossible.

Col. Jim Fisk, of Erie fame, who had a flair for military clothes, had arrayed himself in a Major-General's uniform and rode at the head of the procession. When the trouble reached a really serious stage, Jim spurred his horse and rode at a break-neck pace down Eighth Avenue to Twenty-third Street. There stood the Opera House which he owned. He made for the stage door, dismounted and was safe. This exploit drew bitter criticism which never really subsided. The charge of cowardice clung to him all his life.

This penchant for showy clothes was also a feature of the sailing of the Fall River Line which Fisk owned. He would dress himself up in an Admiral's uniform and parade the upper deck where all could see him till the boat started. He wore his mustache waxed at both ends and curled to a nicety. "He was certainly a queer character," added Muldoon, "and I wasn't so much surprised as many other people when he was shot and killed in the Broadway Central Hotel by his jealous rival, Edward S. Stokes." Josie Mansfield, the cause of the tragedy between Stokes and Fisk, survived nearly fifty years after the trial that ended in Stokes' acquittal. Her days in Paris were spent in squalid poverty and I think she now lies in a pauper's grave.

Many old New Yorkers recall affectionately that fine old athlete, William Muldoon, who, in later years, owned a fine farm, up in Westchester, where many celebrated public men went to regain their shattered health. Taft, Roosevelt are only examples of the type who repaired to Billy's sanitarium. He never preached but said, as an expert in bringing men back to health, "If you want to enjoy real health, then leave whisky and tobacco alone."

CHAPTER XXII

Why Castle Garden Is Revered

FEW buildings in our city enjoy such a national and international reputation as old Castle Garden, now the Aquarium. Mr. Wall, the learned librarian of the New York Historical Society, tells me that more inquiries reach him from the hinterland for picture postcards of this building than for any other structure in New York, not even excepting the Woolworth or the Empire State.

To me and to most New Yorkers, this seems quite understandable. For nearly thirty years, it was the sole landing place for emigrants from all countries. There were no exceptions. Every foreigner coming here to make his home, must first pass through the portals of Castle Garden. As it functioned in this capacity during the generation in which literally millions of foreigners landed, they naturally carried away with them a vivid recollection of the building with which they first came into contact on their arrival at their new home. Many thousands went to the Eastern and Middle States. Many more thousands settled in the West where free land awaited them. The huge Norwegian and Swedish populations of the Northwest were only one contingent. The others were equally large, if not larger.

As their families grew up, they were naturally interested in the countries from which their parents came. So in the course of that recital, Castle Garden naturally took a prominent place. The story of this old landing place was in this manner handed down from one generation to another. So it

is quite easy to agree with Mr. Wall when he places that building at the head of the best-known buildings in America. A large oil painting owned by the Society shows the building as it was in 1812 when it was first erected as a fort during the War with Great Britain. It stands quite a distance from the shore, as it was not until 1851 that the land at the foot of Broadway was extended and what we now know as "Battery Park" was created. During this filling-in process, the island on which Fort Clinton stood, as it was then called, was joined to the mainland and the island disappeared. The picture of which we speak gives an excellent idea of just how the old fort looked and how far it was from the shore.

Its use as a fort was soon abandoned. But its superb location, facing one of the most beautiful harbors in all the world, made it a popular resort in summertime, and it became something of an outdoor refreshment garden. There are still extant many humorous references to ice cream which was introduced to New York at the Garden and the writers describe how it made them "feel real chilly" when they first tasted this confection. Both the Garden and the ice cream increased in popularity. Then along came the celebrated P. T. Barnum who turned it into a beautiful music hall, opening it with the famous Swedish Nightingale, Jenny Lind. Almost ten thousand persons greeted the singer on her first appearance and she sang there nightly for a long time.

As the city grew in population and business houses crowded out the private houses that formerly clustered round the Park, the old Garden suffered from the competition of amusement houses more conveniently located for the shift in population, and its popularity declined. The Government then decided to use it as an Emigrant Landing Station in place of Ward and Blackwell's Islands hitherto used for that purpose. And so began that colorful career which was to endear the old structure to so many of our people.

It is doubtful if any building ever before received so many

poor and unknown persons who afterwards became rich and famous.

A. T. Stewart, Andrew Carnegie, Jacob H. Schiff, Alexander Graham Bell, Michael Pupin, are only a few and I could fill up many pages of this book if I were to attempt to mention even a small part of the great men who first saw the Land of Opportunity through the portals of Old Castle Garden.

A change in the method of handling incoming strangers and the necessity for larger and better accommodations led to the selection of Ellis Island as a new receiving station and Castle Garden once more reverted to a period of inaction. This was short-lived, but even then it was busy as a public swimming bath. Finally, a new and splendid use for it was found in using it for an aquarium. Its location for this purpose was ideal, and already it is one of the largest and most interesting marine museums in the world and boasts the attendance of many thousands weekly. Many additions and extensions have been made to the old building, but in its main features it is still the original structure erected as New York's first line of defense over a hundred years ago.

Early in the last century, there was no more beautiful parade ground in the world than this same Battery. At all times, it provides one of the most entrancing marine spectacles in the world and its vast ocean-going liners is a sight that brings many strangers every day to view it.

Castle Garden will ever remain a pleasant memory in the hearts of thousands who recall nothing else of New York, but who fondly recall the house that opened its hospitable doors to the stranger within its gates.

Along with the Nihilists, Fenians, tongs and other flora and fauna that flourished at that time were secret organizations who anticipated the present pastime of the racketeers for taking certain persons "for a ride."

The "Black Hand" was something new in our local experience. It was an exotic imported by our Italian friends. Their

compatriots, the Sicilians, enjoyed a similar luxury called the Mafia. When the wrath of these societies was directed toward some unfortunate member of their own race, that poor wretch had to comply with whatever demands were made in a letter signed with the imprint of an inky hand. So when an Italian received a missive with this artistic decoration, he promptly vanished or complied with the demand, whatever it was.

All of these gentry were much addicted to the gentle art of bomb planting. And when a bomb went off, a whole house or the front of a building generally went with it. By this delicate bit of attention, many grievances were wiped out and long-concealed enmity found its release. Not until our Police Department decided to add detectives, etc., of foreign extraction to our regular force, was the law able to cope with this new phase of deviltry. And one of our most famous detectives who had traced his quarry to Italy was suddenly and mysteriously shot while standing on a street corner in Palermo.

Herr Most was a striking character. He held forth on the East Side and ostensibly raised funds for the German Socialist party. He was not a pleasant person to look upon and must have absorbed much beer to produce his idea of a perfect form, which was the antithesis of the present silhouette. In addition to being over-fat, he was also not over-clean. He was however a ready and skillful debater and prolific writer. He printed a daily paper, largely propaganda, which his followers supported and with subscriptions of one kind or another he managed to live blatantly if not comfortably.

Emma Goldman was the most rabid of them all. A former garment maker, she contrived to become spokesman for the Anti-Czarist group in New York, and while not a practicing Nihilist, her literature and speeches were equally venomous. It was generally expected among her friends and admirers that when the Russian autocrats were finally dethroned, Emma would be high in the councils of the new Government

if she chose. Contrary to these benevolent expectations, the Soviet Government elected her to break stones and dwell in a bleak fortress at Government expense. It seemed to me a rather poor return, for what she attempted to do in the way of destroying the Romanoffs. Stalin finally let her off on condition that she would leave Russia, which she did. She was supposed to be married to another Bolshevik, Mr. Alexander Berkman, who climbed to fame in her coterie by his cowardly attempt to murder Henry C. Frick in his office in Pittsburgh, which created a great sensation at the time.

Another Bronx orator actually did achieve something—Trotsky. He was among the most vehement and truculent characters that the Socialists of the East Side ever produced. He was by no means so well known to the general public as he was to the foreign masses of the East Side, who flocked to his meetings and cursed the minions of the law on all possible occasions. His opportunity came with the World War and nothing in all history to my mind is stranger than the rise of this man. And it is a moral certainty that no one else in New York considered that in this unkempt and disheveled social outcast lay one of the hopes of Russia's downtrodden millions. He was apparently only one of the many who give the police so much trouble when they have a public meeting. He had little or no influence even among his own circle while here, and his elevation to eminence in Russia is one of the things difficult to understand. Whether it was lack of ability or the arrow of outraged fortune which laid him low, I do not pretend to say. At all events, Trotsky is again a soldier of fortune. Lenin is gone; but his soul apparently lives on in the Soviet Republic, and he too was one of the most impassioned soap box orators the Bronx ever produced.

CHAPTER XXIII

Famous New York Hotels of the Seventies

FEW old New Yorkers do not look back with affectionate regret to the hotels that flourished when they were young and the town was a better place to live in than it is now.

Most of those houses of entertainment have long since made way for the steel and cement skyscrapers, for which the city is famous, but neither they nor the landlords have been altogether forgotten. There are scores of those hotels that I remember well, far better than I do the counting rooms of the firms with which my employers did business. In no respect has the town undergone more radical change during the past half century than in its manner of entertaining strangers, and as the old customs passed away the old time landlords made way for the corporations and men of large affairs who operate modern caravansaries in businesslike fashion and are, as a general thing, personally unknown to the men and women to whom they give shelter. The old order survives in the word "guest" which has lost its original significance and should be changed to "customer."

The landlord of the '70s was a personality, not a corporation. There were families of landlords, too, for hotel-keeping ran in the blood as acting does in the veins of players. The Stetsons, the Lelands, the Kerrs were of the race that gave "entertainment for man and beast," a term designed to set the biped apart from the quadruped. On the shoulders of each member of those families had fallen the mantle of the old-fashioned country tavern-keeper who knew his guests by

sight and greeted the arriving traveler by name and with what well-fed reporters have frequently called a "grasp of the hand with his heart in it." This branch of the business has long since been relegated to the clerk behind the marble counter who is usually a member of the social club appropriately termed "The Greeters."

The hotels of the Seventies were for the most part on Broadway below Twenty-third Street, and were as a rule, more home-like than the modern caravansaries and each one had its special and distinctive clientele. The rooms were larger, and many of them were heated by open fireplaces, but bathrooms were few and far between. The hotel-keepers prided themselves on their food, aiming at the high standard set by Delmonico whose uptown restaurant was then at the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and Fourteenth Street. I remember that as I walked downtown in the morning I always met *Ciro Delmonico* returning in a cab from his morning's marketing, a duty that he never entrusted to a subordinate. Another reminder of this famous house awaited me at Bowling Green in the shape of the *Stevens House*, one of the earliest of the *Delmonico* ventures and an object of wonder not only because of its good fare but also because of the great size and number of its bathtubs. My father lived there, I think in the '40s, paying four-fifty a week for his room and board, and in later years he considered that the *Delmonico* kitchen had slightly deteriorated since then. It was in this hostelry that *Frank Forrester*, one of the earliest writers on American sport, killed himself, and it was here that *Midy Morgan*, the pioneer female newspaper reporter, worked as a chambermaid.

The *Astor House*, considered a marvelous edifice at the time of its erection, was the New York abiding place of *Daniel Webster*, and many of the most distinguished statesmen of his day. It had an open fireplace in every one of its rooms and was built around a court with a fountain in the

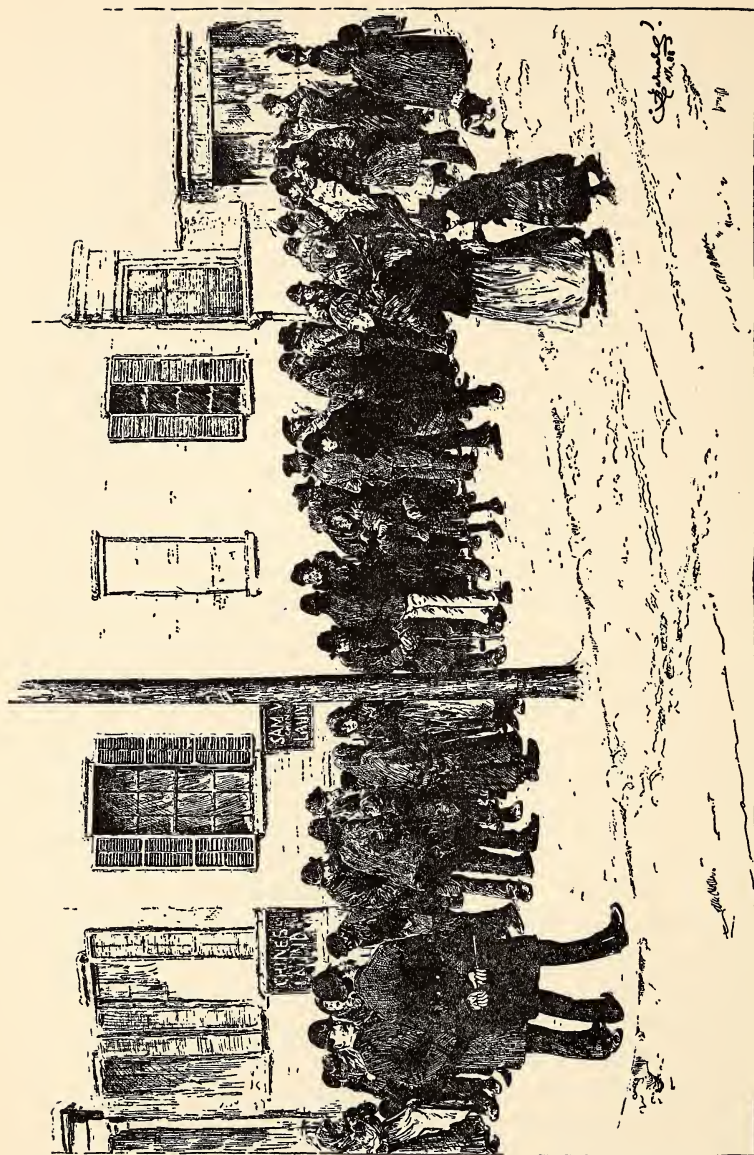
middle; the entire space was afterward utilized for the lunch room. The St. Nicholas Hotel was a distinctively Southern House and the St. Charles on the other side of the street was patronized almost exclusively by circus people. A little further uptown was the Metropolitan, where Tweed had entertained his friends of the Albany legislature. It was famous for its crystal chandeliers and at the time of its demolition these were purchased by Oscar Hammerstein and placed in the huge amusement building that he erected at Broadway and Forty-fourth Street. What is now the Broadway Central and was then, I believe, called the Grand Central, was regarded as a veritable palace when it was first opened to the public. It was here that Fisk was killed by Stokes and it stands today not only as a reminder of that tragedy but as an interesting relic of hotel-keeping of by-gone days. I believe it is still conducted on the American plan and that throngs of colored waiters roam as of yore, through its vast dining room, bearing trays on the palms of their uplifted hands, an art now extinct elsewhere.

The New York Hotel, also built around an open court, had enjoyed, even during the Civil War, for internment was unknown then, a large Southern patronage and was conducted by Hildreth of later Long Branch renown. The Sinclair House, at the corner of Eighth Street, was famous for its American cookery, sharing honors with the Ashland on Fourth Avenue. Mr. Ashman of the Sinclair and Mr. Brockway of the Ashland were about the last of New York's landlords of the old school. Artemus Ward lived at the Sinclair during his stay in New York as editor of *Vanity Fair*. The St. Denis at the corner of Eleventh Street was popular with citizens and out of town patrons of the better class until the Sullivan clan moved over from their fitting habitat, the Occidental, on the Bowery. What was in later years the Morton House was then the Union Palace, the favorite abiding place of players and journalists, a patronage that it enjoyed until

the Rialto moved away from Union Square. Many actors were also to be found at the Union Square Hotel, kept by Andrew J. Dam and his son. The last named dabbled in theatricals and was said to have advanced money to Henry E. Abbey for a small interest in the first Bernhardt season.

On the northern side of Union Square was the Everett House, for years the favorite stopping place of opera singers and musicians, many of whom, Clara Louise Kellogg among the number, patronized it until its demolition not many years ago, although grand opera had long since migrated from the Academy of Music to the Metropolitan Opera House. A block further uptown on Fourth Avenue was the Clarendon, which boasted, and not without reason, of its aristocratic clientele. It was conducted on the American plan and there was a long table in its dining room where whole families ate together in harmony. If it possessed a bar I never discovered it, but I doubt if its patrons, many of whom were of the opulent British class, were permitted to go dry. Further north on Fourth Avenue was the Ashland, already mentioned, as the home of excellent American cookery, and beyond that one came upon the Putnam House, kept by Lawrence Kerr, and as popular as the Clarendon though catering to a very different class, among whom were many circus folk from the Madison Square Garden across the way. Following an ancient country custom Mr. Kerr kept a basket of apples on his bar for free munching. At Forty-second Street was the Grand Union, always renowned for its excellent bar and restaurant and in later years for its picture gallery.

Taking up once more the route up Broadway interrupted at Fourteenth Street, we find the Spingler House, built by the family of that name on the west side of Union Square, and a little further north the Continental, where Chester A. Arthur lived in his bachelor days. The St. Germain stood on the site now occupied by the Flatiron Building, and on the west side of the block between Twenty-third and Twenty-



The bread line—style of 1888.

fourth Streets was the Fifth Avenue, perhaps the most famous of the city's many hotels. Built on ground once occupied by a country tavern it served during the Civil War as a night exchange for brokers engaged in the frantic speculations in gold that marked that period. Its spacious lobby was to the last a public thoroughfare, thronged at all times by well-to-do citizens and strangers of every profession. It was the New York headquarters of the Republican party who held important conferences and conventions within its walls. When President Grant visited the city, and in those simple days he came from Washington alone and without a guard of Secret Service men, he stopped at the Fifth Avenue and was to be seen strolling about the lobby. The famous "Amen" Corner had its origin in the group of politicians and newspaper men who frequented the Fifth Avenue lobby.

To the north of the Fifth Avenue was the Albemarle, a quiet house with an excellent bar on the Broadway side, much frequented by strollers who wished to drink and talk at small tables instead of standing. It was from one of the windows of this hostelry that Mrs. Langtry watched the burning of the Park Theatre on the date of her intended American début. On the same block was the Hoffman House, conducted by Edward S. Stokes after his release from Sing Sing. The lobby of the Hoffman was always crowded with politicians, actors, wine agents, promoters and other bits of flotsam and jetsam from the pavement of Broadway. During a political campaign it was a betting ring for politicians who made huge wagers for the purpose of influencing public opinion and there was also much genuine betting with John Morrissey as stake-holder. After the Returning Board had declared Hayes President, Morrissey announced that all bets were off and returned the money entrusted to him, less his commission of three per cent. Next in order came the St. James, with a cozy bar in the rear of a little room in which cigars were sold by a Russian of high degree. The windows of the

restaurant looked out on Broadway and the front tables were always in demand. Across the street was the building to which Delmonico moved from Fourteenth Street in the '70s and which later became the Café Martin. The history of Delmonico's marches side by side with that of social and financial New York. At the time of which I write it stood absolutely alone as the eating-house of the polite world, the Maison Dorée having gone out of existence after setting itself up as a rival. It was said, and with no small degree of truth, that no man ever attained eminence in the town without passing through the café and restaurant of this world-famous establishment. Its ball-room and private dining-rooms were the scene of countless gatherings of wealth and fashion; its public dining-room on the Fifth Avenue side of the building was filled nightly with beautifully dressed women and men of distinction; in its café one could always find many of the leading representatives of finance, commerce and the learned professions. There is no one place in New York at the present time of which all this can be said. Although not a hotel in the usual sense of the word there were on its upper floors rooms in which wealthy bachelors were domiciled.

To the north of Delmonico's was the Coleman House on the west side of the street, a hotel that was said to offer to the entomologist an abundant field for scientific research. Nearby was the Brower House of fragrant memory because of the excellence of the food served at its lunch counter. It was liberally patronized by the better class of gamblers and sporting men whose fondness for good eating is notorious. It was also the favorite resort of such well-known exponents of Negro minstrelsy as Billy Birch, Charley Backus and other members of the San Francisco Minstrel Company, on whom we young fellows were wont to gaze with respectful awe as the source of all current humor. Over the way was the Gilsey House at the northeast corner of Twenty-ninth Street and converted in quite recent years into an office building. I am

uncertain as to its earliest landlord, but I well remember its popularity under the direction of James Breslin, prior to the opening of the hotel bearing his name on the opposite corner. The Sturtevant, occupying the greater part of the block between Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Streets, was a brown-stone structure of what would now be regarded as of moderate height, and I recall it as the stopping place of many mine promoters from the Far West and a few actors, though it doubtless had other patrons. The Grand Hotel at Thirty-first Street left but a slight dent on my memory, possibly because it was so quiet and respectable.

If there were any hotels at this time between Thirty-fourth and Forty-second Streets I do not recall them, but I do remember the Broadway at the last named corner, then a peaceful spot and quite unlike the present heart of the Great White Way. In later years the building was divided and part of it became the Metropole under the management of the Considines. It was in another house of the same name that the Rosenthal murder took place. There was a hotel at the northeast corner of Forty-second Street and Broadway, but I am not sure in regard to the date of its erection. The Royal, at the corner of Fortieth Street and Sixth Avenue, I recall distinctly. It was destroyed afterwards by fire with a disastrous death roll, followed by much scandalous gossip concerning the victims.

Fifth Avenue had its hotels as well as Broadway in the Seventies, ranging geographically from the Brevoort at Eighth Street to the newly erected Buckingham on the southeast corner of Fiftieth. The Brevoort was distinctly an aristocratic house, sharing with the Clarendon the honor of sheltering most of the titled and well-connected Englishmen who did not find free lodgings in the homes of socially ambitious citizens. Its register was marked with the names of captains of the ocean liners and I always suspected that they were entertained without cost to themselves because of the passengers

whom they steered in that direction. A great banquet was given there in honor of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, a fact attested by a framed copy of the menu card that hangs in the hall to this day. Curiously enough the date on the card is some years removed from that of the Prince's visit to this country. The Berkeley and Grosvenor, which, together with the Brevoort, are among the very few old hotels still standing, were quiet family houses entertaining no transient guests and depending entirely on a wealthy and refined clientele. The policy of both houses has not changed with the passing years. A few blocks further north was the Glenham in one of whose chambers the eccentric son of Commodore Vanderbilt took his own life.

The Brunswick just above Madison Square was an exceedingly fine hotel, kept by Mitchell and Kinsler, who catered successfully to the fashionable element for several years and made it the favorite stopping place for wealthy Yale and Harvard undergraduates. The peculiar happening that brought ruin to this excellent hostelry is well worth relating, for it shows that hotel-keeping must face other dangers than fire and burglary. On a certain bright winter morning, in the late Eighties, unless my memory be at fault, a tall, well-dressed gentleman whose manner of speaking rather confirmed his claim to the title, entered the Brunswick and arranged with the clerk for the entertainment of a specified number of friends at supper that night. The feast was to put the finishing touch on a sleighing party. Taking from his pocket a large roll of bills he offered payment in advance, but the clerk had been deceived by his appearance and politely declined the offer. Late that night a huge four-horse sleigh drew up in front of the hotel and from it descended a swarm of men and women of a class never seen in the Brunswick. With the polite stranger leading they entered the dining-room and seated themselves at the long table that awaited their coming. There was nothing to do but serve the

party and this the astounded waiters proceeded to do. The stranger was none other than the notorious Billy McGlory, proprietor of a low East Side resort, called Armory Hall, and his guests were the hangers-on of that delectable establishment. The story of his sleighing was printed in the newspapers and ruined the fair name of the hotel.

We young fellows of the '70s regarded the Grand Central as the very acme of splendor and luxury, but it faded from our imagination when the Windsor threw open its doors to a wondering public. The Windsor seemed to us the very last word in gorgeous decoration and modern convenience, and visitors from all parts of the country hastened to ensconce themselves in its large, beautifully furnished rooms. Conducted on the American plan it set before its guests a bewildering variety of dishes served in a manner of elegance to which many of those who ate them had previously been strangers. Andrew Carnegie made it his home during his frequent visits to New York and other commercial and financial magnates from the West, and what is now termed the Midwest, were quick to follow in his footsteps. The presence of these visitors attracted New Yorkers of their class together with Wall Street brokers and speculators so that the nightly throng in its corridors had the flavor of the stock market. Thus were visitors from afar frequently enabled to behold Jay Gould in the flesh. The Ultima Thule in the northward march of hotel building was reached in the erection of the Windsor and Buckingham, so far as the history of the Seventies is concerned, and it was many years before anything on a greater scale of magnificence was attempted, for there was a lean era of economy after the panic of '73. The Buckingham has only recently been torn down, but the Windsor was destroyed by a fire that burned with such incredible swiftness and cost so many lives that the fact that it took place in daytime instead of at night seemed like a special intervention of Providence.

In addition to the hotels on Fifth Avenue and Broadway there were scattered about the city many others deserving of mention. Those on Fourth Avenue I have already named and east of that thoroughfare there was the Gramercy on the east side of the park of that name. A quiet family house with a refined, unostentatious patronage, it enjoyed brief notoriety as the scene of the elaborate practical joke played on the simple English husband of Adelaide Neilson by Ed Sothorn and a few of his fellow actors. By means of a pretended fight with bowie knives after the fashion of the Southwest they gave the young and unsophisticated Briton the fright of his life. On Third Avenue and Twenty-fourth Street was the Bull's Head, a house of quite a different sort, for it was frequented by horse dealers and cattle drovers and bore a rustic aspect unlike anything else in the town. Daniel Drew, an illiterate speculator, had been its landlord in earlier years and it is possible that to him it owed the aroma of the cow-yard that clung to it until the last.

The most conspicuous of the houses catering to visitors abroad were the Café Martin, at Ninth Street and University Place, to which all newly arrived French voyagers bent their steps, and the Belvidere at which the German travelers stopped. The Café Martin, with its fine kitchen and well stocked cellar, had a Parisian atmosphere that New Yorkers found to their taste and it soon gained a vogue that it retains to the present day. There were also smaller and less famous hotels in which other foreigners sought shelter on reaching our shores. A typical American hotel which never sought alien guests was the Westminster on East Sixteenth Street, the winter home of many literary men. French's Hotel on Park Row lives in the legendry of the town as the place from which Joseph Pulitzer, then a very poor young immigrant, was once excluded because of the shabbiness of his attire. It was because of this affront that years later he bought the property and erected the World Building on its site.

I have written these notes on the hotels of an elder day entirely from memory and without notes and have set down only those places of entertainment of which I retain a vivid recollection. There were many less conspicuous houses that I recall only by name and have left unmentioned. The period of which I have written antedated the apartment hotel and I am uncertain as to the date at which the first of the bachelor apartments was built. There is more luxury in the modern steam-heated house of gaudy furnishing, but no more comfort than was afforded by the larger rooms with their cheery open fires. Moreover, the great abundance and variety of game and the low price at which it was served in even the more modest restaurants more than atoned, in my opinion, for any modern improvements which we have had.

The Hoffman House bar, at the corner of Twenty-fifth Street and Broadway, was known all over the civilized world and became more famous as the years rolled by. It occupied the Twenty-fourth Street side of the palatial Hoffman House, running from the corner a matter of seventy-five feet to the rear.

The bar itself was a magnificent structure of carved mahogany, the mirrors that lined the walls were said to be the largest in America—the ceiling was very lofty—and every detail of the furniture and fixtures was of the most elegant and costly kind.

No small part of its fame came from the magnificent paintings on which Edward S. Stokes, one of its proprietors, lavished thousands. He bought the immense picture—the most celebrated work of Bouguereau, a French painter who was then the rage on account of his marvelous painting of the nude figure—at a private auction from the Wolfe estate. He paid exactly ten thousand and ten dollars for “Nymphs and Satyr,” and only a few years afterward refused thirty thousand dollars for it. The picture brought visitors from all over the country and many foreigners came in to see it. It was un-

questionably the biggest single advertisement any hotel in this country—probably in the world—ever had during the twenty odd years it hung in the Hoffman House bar. In addition, there were several other equally fine large paintings, notably the “Narcissus,” and a great piece crowded with nude figures by a German painter, “The Vision of Faust.”

The entire hotel was a showplace, and that bar was its crowning attraction. One day in the week was “Ladies’ Day,” and any lady calling at the hotel was met by a boy with a printed catalogue describing the house and its works of art. Ladies were escorted through the bar unless they declined.

The young scion of wealth would often spend two or three hundred dollars and more at a bar like the Hoffman in a single afternoon, if he were on a wine-spree. Sometimes he would come in alone and order wine to be opened “for the house,” meaning all present in the bar at the time—there was no obligation even to touch glasses with him. He would lift his own, standing at the bar generally—making a single slight bow all round, which meant that it was “on him.” Strangers would respond by lifting their glasses. There was no noise, no demonstration. It was an era of good feeling and free spending, and such manifestations were accepted for just that and no more in all first-class places. In this way, even in those low-priced times with wine at two and three dollars the pint, and three to five dollars the quart, fifty dollars could be spent in less than five minutes. And often would come the order for another round. Perhaps some good spender in the house would take it up, and another, not to be outdone, would follow him. It was the golden age of “treating”—such “treating” as the world never knew before and never will see again. For most of these men were strangers to each other. It could never have happened anywhere except on American soil in such lavishness. Foolish, extravagant, whatever you may choose to call the custom, it still remains a glorious and a gladsome thing in American annals. Of course it has gone,

never to return. Nor do I suppose any of us really want it back. The wine-agent was a different order of being. A shrewd, affable personage, full of good stories and all kinds of social gifts—dressed in the very best of the fashion—capable of absorbing and standing an enormous amount of drink, yet always with an eye to the main chance, knowing that his job depended wholly on the sales account. Personally, he did not seek orders for his brand. His rôle was that of the man-about-town, the swell “rounder,” who dropped into one of the “big” cafés, sat down at a table and ordered a pint of his own brand. Any man he knew who happened in would be very cordially invited over to join him—and another bottle would be ordered. He would sit there for an hour in his elegant leisure, smoking and entertaining his little party—as other friends and their companions dropped in they would be invited to join the party—and what man could refuse a glass of the French champagne in those days—and would saunter up Broadway to the next swell place. He would keep up this life from the hour past noon—generally two or three o’clock—till the places closed.

It is quite hard to realize when we look around us today and see so many very comely and bright young women on our streets, in our offices, and in our houses, that not so very long ago we classed these altogether delightful and amiable citizens along with our imbeciles, criminals and other undesirables. At a speech before the Harvard Alumni, Julia Ward Howe arguing for coëducation, exclaimed “Are women people?” It was quite a conundrum. A Negro could vote and an Irishman who hadn’t yet dropped his brogue could vote and a German who could hardly speak English could vote. All these people had their say as to how we should be governed and under what conditions we should live. The only intelligent humans, who hadn’t a thing to say on these important matters, were our mothers, our wives, sisters and sweethearts. And the calamities that were prophesied in case women got

the ballot! They were horrible to contemplate. So we went on singing "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord" written by a woman and looked at *Uncle Tom's Cabin* written by a woman which struck the shackles of slavery from five million serfs and calmly proceeded to repeat to ourselves that ancient creed, "Women's place is in the home," or in the language of the later Kaiser: "*Kinder, Küche, Kirche.*" The complacency of men was sublime.

But one day there swept down Fifth Avenue a host of women from all over the land. Their ranks stretched from curb to curb. Banners flying, bands playing, and over all, the solemn tramp, tramp, of a million feet. From early in the morning, the sound never ceased—tramp, tramp—tramp, tramp. At times, and for the most part the women marched in silence. Occasionally there was laughter and sometimes a song. But on the whole, the marchers bore an air of earnestness that was unmistakable. There was an atmosphere of grimness that was significantly impressive. That was the first physical demonstration of women's determination to put an end to their servitude; to end this ghastly joke about women being people and to take their places among the men and have their say on questions affecting many things which inevitably touched that most sacred of all human institutions, the home.

In that parade were no small number of women who were no longer young; thousands, whose years of youth were fast receding and thousands more, whose faces were aglow with the lust of battle and who were ready to prove their worth. In England, Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter had been imprisoned for just such an exhibition of political independence. While we had not gone so far as that in this country, the gathering of women for such a purpose was regarded as undesirable, and in Washington some women were arrested for picketing the White House too closely. We did not, however, treat these disturbers with the severity visited upon them in

England. Our politicians are not so hidebound, not so tied up with tradition as their colleagues across the sea, and that impressive demonstration on Fifth Avenue caused them to stop and consider. Very soon after, the bill granting the franchise was passed and a fight of nearly fifty years ended in victory for the women. A few years later when the great World War broke upon us in all its frightful fury, we were very glad to have the assistance, the help and the support of our women, and thankful to be in a position to say that we had welcomed them into our political life without waiting—as in the case of England—to be coerced into it. I was rather amused recently in London to notice that a statue of Mrs. Pankhurst has been erected in the Park adjoining the House of Commons which she flouted in her lifetime and frequently disrupted.

In 1898, the old city of which we have been writing, in a sense disappears. What we have affectionately known—and probably always will—as Old New York, no longer exists. Its new name is the Borough of Manhattan, one of the five Boroughs of Greater New York, which now embraces not only New York County but Kings, Queens, Bronx, and Richmond. The little hamlet on the edge of a wilderness of an unknown Continent has grown from less than two hundred people to be one of the greatest cities of the whole world.

And so we leave her. The great inventions of the closing days of the Nineteenth Century and which are to transform the lives, habits and customs of the people, are rapidly approaching completion. A new and greater Renaissance is at hand. We are about to assume a new and greater civilization than was ever dreamed possible.

The telephone is here; so are the electric light, the motor car, the movies, the subway and the radio. They are all so new, so fresh that Time's mellowing influence has not yet had time to make them history.

In these pages, we have sought to preserve some homely

memories of its rise and progress from its beginning. It is as if we had raised a child from infancy and now we see it march off to its first day in school. We seem to have lost something.

The End



HV1792 Brown, Henry Collins
V Brownstone fronts and
saratoga trunks.

C.1

Date Due			

HV1792

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Brown, Henry Collins

AUTHOR

Brownstone fronts and saratoga

TITLE

trunks.

DATE DUE	BORROWER'S NAME

